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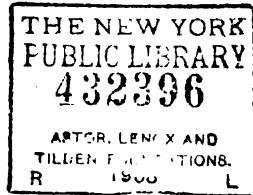
The Drama

CLASSIC CURIOSITIES OF DRAMATIC
LITERATURE.

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ROY WIL
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PROLOGUE.



ADDRESSING a brilliant audience, embracing many of the keenest intellects in the Athens of the North, at the sessional opening of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, in November, 1881, Sir Henry Irving—as yet unknighthed—took occasion to say that they could “depend upon two things: that the theatre as a whole is never below the average moral sense of the time, and that the inevitable demand for an admixture, at least, of wholesome sentiment in every sort of dramatic production brings the ruling tone of the theatre, whatever drawback may exist, up to the highest level at which the general morality of the time can truly be registered.”

Happily, among the cultured at least, that curious Puritanical fallacy of the inevitable contamination wrought by the stage had been practically exploded before Sir Henry's luminous and masterly defence of the drama. Indeed, it might with greater truth be maintained that society has had a more corrupting

PROLOGUE.

influence upon the stage than has the stage upon society.

Take, for example, early dramatic literature. Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides are characterized by a pure and elevated tone, an unquestionably higher tone than the society of their day. They did nothing to lower, but much to elevate the morals of their countrymen. Aristophanes' incisive glance penetrates the innumerable evils of his time, while his keen intellect divines their secret and often obscure causes. His sovereign contempt for all that is base, his conservative, yet burning patriotism, striving by means of vigorous satire to again rekindle within the bosom of his countrymen the sacred spark, and bring back the grand old days of Marathon, urge him to drag into clear relief the iniquities and errors of his time, and to lash them with his scathing sarcasm.

Among the plays chosen for this first of the two volumes devoted to the classic curiosities of the drama and to plays illustrative of, or castigating, the social conditions of various eras, we have selected Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusæ*, or *Council of Women*, as an example of his unequalled manner of wielding the lash and as a curious proof that some four hundred years before Christ the so-called "new woman"—the

PROLOGUE.

eternal feminine—and divers Utopias were sufficiently in evidence to warrant our great Greek's witty, stinging satire.

Now, let us pause for a glance at the Roman drama. While it would be useless to deny that both Plautus and Terence occasionally handle their subjects with great freedom, we need but to compare their comedies with, say Tacitus' "Annals," Petronius' "Satiræ" or Suetonius' "Lives of the Cæsars" to see how superior to the morality of their period and how modest compared with some other departments of literature is the work of these immortal dramatists. In illustration of this we have selected *The Amphitryon* of Plautus; while *Ines Mendo*, the curious play that follows, is inserted as a representative example of the drama of the romance tongues—a lineal descendant of the old Roman comedy.

The German drama in the very intensity of its purpose is but too apt to sacrifice charm and grace of form, but it never sacrifices morality. It is always rigidly moral. Kotzebue's *Lover's Vows* is a delightful drama, dealing with the adventures of a natural son, his mother and her seducer. Yet, save for one misstep, the mother is a perfectly pure woman and moral maxims fairly ooze from her seducer; nor do we leave the play feeling that he is a hypocrite.

PROLOGUE.

The Japanese drama, perhaps, best illustrates our theme. In a land where, should her parents become poor, custom not only permits but, indeed, encourages a daughter to enter a bagnio to support them, the morality of their drama is heroic. It certainly surpasses that of the people. *The Fatal Error* represents the leading incidents of a modern Japanese play cast into a pleasant ballad.

Two quaint, unusual plays follow. *Omar and Oh My!* is a clever satire on the craze for dramatizing novels and other forms of literature. It is the very apotheosis of absurdity, whereas the singular "marionette" play, *The Death of Tintagiles*, runs to the other extreme. It is fairly tense with emotion.

The French dramatist, as well as novelist, has been accused of encouraging the idea that Frenchmen are always occupied in making love to their neighbors' wives. But Hamerton has clearly pointed out the origin of this belief—the manner in which marriages are generally managed in France leaves no room for interesting love stories. Dramatists and novelists *must* find love stories somewhere, and so they must seek for them in illicit intrigues. Yet that the moral conveyed by such an intrigue can be highly salutary no reader of *The Yoke*, which closes this volume, will, we believe, doubt.

Contents.

	PAGE.
I.—ECCLESIAZUSÆ; OR, THE COUNCIL OF WOMEN—Aristophanes	I-42
II.—AMPHITRYON; OR, JUPITER IN DISGUISE —Plautus	43-104
III.—INES MENDO; OR, THE TRIUMPH OF PREJUDICE—Clara Gazul (Merimee)	105-142
IV.—LOVERS' VOWS; OR, THE NATURAL SON —Kotzebue	143-220
V.—THE FATAL ERROR, VERSIFIED FROM THE JAPANESE—McClatchie	221-242
VI.—OMAR AND OH MY!—A Burlesque— Punch	243-252
VII.—THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES—Maeterlinck	253-274
VIII.—THE YOKE—Guinon and Marni	275-344



THE ECCLESIAZUSÆ;
OR
WOMEN IN COUNCIL.

BY
ARISTOPHANES.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PRAXAGORA.

SEVERAL WOMEN.

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

BLEPYRUS, Husband of Praxagora.

A NEIGHBOUR.

CHREMES.

TWO CITIZENS.

FEMALE CRIER.

A YOUNG WOMAN.

A YOUNG MAN.

THREE OLD WOMEN.

A MAID-SERVANT.

A MASTER.

PRELUDE.

One would be strongly tempted to term this play purely a farce aimed at communism and woman's rights were it not that comedy was such an important part of the Athenian community—indeed, it may justly be said to represent the public conscience—and that our use of the word farce connotes amusement rather than serious purpose. Aristophanes is great not merely for his wit and satire, though these have never been surpassed, but his chief claim to greatness lies in the fact that he is the personification of the spirit of a large and important part of the Athenian populace. He was actuated by a burning patriotism, and the dominant note in all his work is an intense earnestness—an earnestness often hidden, it is true, behind a laughing mask. In fact, serious purpose characterizes Greek literature as a whole. As Browne long since aptly remarked: "Greek literature is not only admirable as presenting a picture of the human intellect in its highest state of perfection, but also for its moral value. It is a monument to all ages of unselfish devotion to a great purpose. Each author seems impressed with the idea that he has a duty to perform, a message to deliver. The lower motives which too often give an impulse to the

literature of modern times did not influence them. They were urged on by an irresistible devotion to their work."

The *Ecclesiazusæ*, which was produced according to some authorities in 392 B. C., according to others in 389, is a bold satire on the communistic theories which were then rampant in Greece and which finally culminated in Plato's great masterpiece, *The Republic*. The underlying purpose is to show that community of property and women is practically impossible. It was probably also intended as a hit at Athens' great rival, Sparta, and as a warning to all innovators "to beware how they endangered by fanciful reforms the integrity of the Athenian institution."

The women of Athens have determined to capture their Parliament that they may pass a law placing the government of the State in the hands of the women exclusively. To accomplish this they steal forth in the early morning hours disguised in male attire and wearing false beards. Before the men can secure garments to replace those taken by the women, the latter have decreed communism and ousted the men from all control of the government. "The first part of the play," says that accomplished Greek scholar, Thomas Sergeant Perry, "is full of amusing comedy; in the second half the women exhibit a delightful wildness. No sooner have they obtained command than they become wildly lawless, and Aristophanes points out with great plainness the disturbing effect of practical socialism. To the end, it will be noticed, the poet remains a sturdy and militant conservative who pathetically struggles against

the tendencies of his time, against the weakening virtue and the failing forces of Athens."

WOMEN IN COUNCIL.

SCENE—The front of a citizen's house, having a lamp suspended over the door. TIME—A little past midnight.

Praxagora.—(Coming out of the house dressed in men's clothes.) O bright eye of the wheel-formed lamp, suspended most commodiously in a situation commanding a wide view (for I will declare both your parentage and your fortunes: for, having been driven with the wheel by the force of the potter, you possess in your nozzles the bright honors of the sun), send forth the signal of flame agreed upon! For to you alone we reveal it:—justly; for you also stand close by us in our bed-chambers when we try the various modes of Aphrodite; and no one excludes your eye from the house, the witness of our bending bodies. And you alone cast light into the secret recesses of our persons, when you singe off the hair which flourishes upon them. And you aid us when secretly opening the storehouses filled with fruits and the Bacchic stream. And although you help to do this, you do not babble of it to the neighbors. Wherefore you shall also be privy to our present designs, as many as were determined on by my friends at the Scira. But none of them is present, who ought to have come. And yet it is close upon daybreak; and the Assembly will take place immediately; and we must take possession of different seats from those which Phyromachus formerly ordered, if you still remember, and sit down without being detected. What then can be the matter? Have they their beards not sewed on, which they were ordered to have? or has it been difficult for them to steal and take their husbands' clothes? But I see a lamp there approaching. Come, now let me retire back, lest the person who approaches should chance to be a man.

(Retires to one side.)

1st Woman.—(Entering with a lamp.) It is time to go; for the herald just now crowed the second time, as we were setting out.

Prax.—(Coming forward out of her hiding-place.) I was lying awake the whole night expecting you. But come, let me summon our neighbor here by tapping at her door; for I must escape the notice of her husband. (Taps at the door.)

2d Woman.—(Coming out of the house.) I heard the tapping of your fingers as I was putting on my shoes, since I was not asleep; but it was only just now I could get my husband's garment.

1st Wom.—Well now I see Clinarete also, and Sostrate here now approaching, and Philænete.

(Enter Clinarete, Sostrate and Philænete.)

Prax.—Will you not hasten then? for Glyce swore that that one of our number who came last should pay three choes of wine and a choenix of chick-peas.

1st Wom.—Don't you see Mellistice, the wife of Smicythion, hastening in her slippers? and she alone appears to me to have come forth from her husband undisturbed.

2d Wom.—And don't you see Gusistrate, the wife of the innkeeper, with her lamp in her right hand, and the wife of Philodoretus, and the wife of Chæretades?

Prax.—I see very many other women also approaching, all that are good for aught in the city.

3d Woman.—(Entering, followed by many others.) And I, my dearest, escaped and stole away with very great difficulty; for my husband kept coughing the whole night, having been stuffed with anchovies over-night.

Prax.—Sit down then, since I see you are assembled, in order that I may ask you about this, if you have done all that was determined on at the Scira.

4th Woman.—Yes. In the first place I have my armpits rougher than a thicket, as was agreed upon. In the next place, whenever my husband went to the market, I anointed my whole body, and basked the whole day standing in the sunshine.

5th Woman.—And I. I threw the razor out of the house the first thing, in order that I might be hairy all over, and no longer like a woman at all.

Prax.—Have you the beards, which we were all ordered to have, whenever we assembled?

4th Wom.—(Holding one up.) Yea, by Hecate! see! here's a fine one!

5th Wom.—(Holding one up.) And I one, not a little finer than that of Epicrates.

Prax.—(Turning to the others.) But what do you say?

4th Wom.—They say yes; for they nod assent.

Prax.—Well now I perceive that you have done the other things. For you have Laconian shoes, and staffs, and your husbands' garments, as we ordered.

6th Woman.—I secretly brought away this club of Lamia's as he was sleeping.

Prax.—This is one of those clubs under whose weight he fizzes.

6th Wom.—By Jupiter the Preserver, he would be a fit person, if there ever was one, to cheat the commonwealth, clothed in the leathern garment of Argus.

Prax.—But come! so that we may also transact what is next, whilst the stars are still in the heavens; for the assembly, to which we are prepared to go, will take place with the dawn.

1st Wom.—Yea, by Jove! wherefore you ought to take your seat under the Bema, over against the Prytanes.

7th Woman.—(Holding up some wool.) By Jove, I brought these here, in order that I might card when the Assembly was full.

Prax.—Full, you rogue?

7th Wom.—Yes, by Diana! for how should I hear any worse, if I carded? My children are naked.

Prax.—"Carded," quoth'a! you who ought to exhibit no part of your person to the meeting! (Turning to the others.) Therefore we should be finely off, if the Assembly chanced to be full, and then some of us strode over and took up her dress and exhibited her deception. Now if we take our seats first, we shall escape observation when we have wrapped our garments close around us: and when we let our beards hang

down, which we will tie on there, who would not think us men on seeing us? At any rate Agyrrhius has the beard of Pronomus, without being noticed. And yet, before this, he was a woman. But now, you see, he has the chief power in the state. On this account, by the coming day, let us venture on so great an enterprise, if by any means we be able to seize upon the administration of the state, so as to do the state some good. For now we neither sail nor row.

7th Wom.—Why, how can an effeminate conclave of women harangue the people?

Prax.—Nay, rather, by far the best, I ween. For they say, that as many of the youths also as most resemble women, are the most skillful in speaking. Now we have this by chance.

7th Wom.—I know not: the want of experience is a sad thing.

Prax.—Therefore we have assembled here on purpose, so that we might practice beforehand what we must say there. You cannot be too quick in tying on your beard; and the others, as many as have practiced speaking.

8th Woman.—But who of us, my friend, does not know how to speak?

Prax.—Come now, do you tie yours on, and quickly become a man: and I myself also, when I have placed the chaplets, will tie on my beard along with you, if it should seem proper to me to make any speech.

2d Wom.—Come hither, dearest Praxagora, see, you rogue, how laughable even the affair seems.

Prax.—How laughable?

2d Wom.—Just as if one were to tie a beard on fried cuttlefish.

Prax.—Purifier, you must carry round—the cat. Come forward to the front! Ariphrades, cease talking! Come forward and sit down. (Here the women mimic the ceremonies of the lustration.) Who wishes to speak?

8th Wom.—I do.

Prax.—Now put on the chaplet, and success to you!

8th Wom.—(Putting it on.) Very well.

Prax.—Speak away!

8th Wom.—Then shall I speak before I drink?

Prax.—"Drink," quoth'a.

8th Wom.—Why have I crowned myself then, my friend?

Prax.—Get out of the way! You would have done such things to us there also.

8th Wom.—How then? don't men also drink in the Assembly?

Prax.—"Drink," quoth'a!

8th Wom.—Yes, by Diana! and that too unmixed wine. At any rate their decrees, as many as they make, are, to people considering well, mad ones, like drunken people's. And, by Jove, they make libations too; or, on what account would they make so many prayers, if wine was not present? And they rail at one another, too, like drunken men; and the policemen carry out him that plays drunken tricks.

Prax.—Go you and sit down; for you are a worthless thing.

8th Wom.—By Jove, upon my word it were better for me not to have a beard; for, as it seems, I shall be parched with thirst.

(Goes and sits down.)

Prax.—Is there any other who wishes to speak?

9th Woman.—I do.

Prax.—Come now, crown yourself! for the business is going on. Come now, see that you speak after the manner of men, and properly, having leaned your body on your staff.

9th Wom.—I should have wished some other one of those accustomed to speak were giving the best advice, in order that I might have been sitting quiet. But now, according to my motion, I will not suffer a single hostess to make cisterns of water in the taverns. I don't approve of it, by the two goddesses!

Prax.—"By the two goddesses!" Wretch, where have you your senses?

9th Wom.—What's the matter? for indeed I did not ask you for drink.

Prax.—No, by Jove; but you swore by the two goddesses, being a man. And yet you spoke the rest most cleverly.

9th Wom.—(Correcting herself.) Oh!—by Apollo!

Prax.—(Snatching the chaplet from her.) Have done then! for I would not put forward one foot to hold an assembly, unless this shall be arranged precisely.

9th Wom.—Give me the chaplet! I will speak again. For now I think I have gone over it properly in my mind. "To me, O women, who are sitting here"——

Prax.—Again you are calling the men "women," you wretch.

9th Wom.—It's on account of Epigonus yonder. For when I looked thither I thought I was speaking to women.

Prax.—Away with you also, and sit down there. Methinks I must take this chaplet myself and speak for you. I pray to the gods that I may bring our plans to a successful issue. "I have an equal share in this country as you; but I am vexed and annoyed at all the transactions of the state. For I see it always employing bad leaders: and if any be good for one day, he is bad for ten. Have you committed it to another; he will do still more mischief. Therefore it is difficult to advise men so hard to please as you, who are afraid of those who wish to love you, but those who are not willing you constantly supplicate. There was a time when we did not make use of Assemblies at all, but considered Agyrrhius a villain. But now, when we do make use of them, he who has received money praises the custom above measure; but he who has not received says that those who seek to receive pay in the Assembly are worthy of death."

1st Wom.—By Venus, you say this well.

Prax.—You have mentioned Venus, you wretch. You would have done a pretty thing, if you had said this in the Assembly.

1st Wom.—But I would not have said it.

Prax.—(To the first woman.) Neither accustom yourself now to say it. (Returning to her subject.) "Again, when we deliberated about this alliance, they said the state would perish, if it did not take place: and when now it did take place, they were vexed; and the orator who persuaded you to it, immediately fled away. Is it necessary to launch ships, the poor man approves of it, but the wealthy and the farmers do not approve of it. You were vexed at the Corinthians, and they at you. But now they are good—and do you now be good to them.

Argeus is ignorant, but Hieronymus is clever. A hope of safety peeped out, but it is banished, Thrasybulus himself not being called to our aid."

1st Wom.—What a sagacious man!

Prax.—(To first woman.) Now you praise rightly. (Returning to her subject.) "You, O people, are the cause of this. For you, receiving the public money as pay, watch, each of you, in private, what he shall gain; while the state totters along like *Æsopus*. If therefore you take my advice, you shall still be saved. I assert that we ought to intrust the state to the women. For in our houses we employ them as stewards and managers."

2d Wom.—Well done! well done! by Jove! well done! say on, say on, O good sir!

Prax.—"But that they are superior to us in their habits I will demonstrate. For, in the first place, they wash their wool in warm water, every one of them, after the ancient custom. And you will not see them trying in a different way. But would not the city of the Athenians be saved, if it observed this properly, unless it made itself busy with some other new-fangled scheme? They roast sitting, just as before. They carry burdens on their heads, just as before. They keep the *Theomophoria*, just as before. They bake their cheese-cakes, just as before. They torment their husbands, just as before. They have paramours in the house, just as before. They buy dainties for themselves, just as before. They like their wine unmixed, just as before. They delight in being wantonly treated, just as before. Therefore, sirs, let us intrust the city to them, and not chatter exceedingly, nor inquire what in the world they will do; but let us fairly suffer them to govern, having considered this alone, that, in the first place, being mothers, they will be desirous to save the soldiers; and in the next place, who could send provisions quicker than the parent? A woman is most ingenious in providing money; and when governing, could never be deceived; for they themselves are accustomed to deceive. The rest I will omit: but if you take my advice in this, you will spend your lives happily."

1st Wom.—Well done, O sweetest *Praxagora*, and cleverly! Whence, you rogue, did you learn this so prettily?

Prax.—During the flight I dwelt with my husband in the Pnyx; and then I learnt by hearing the orators.

1st Wom.—No wonder then, my dear, you are clever and wise: and we women elect you as general on the spot, if you will effect these things, which you have in your mind. But if Cephalus should be unlucky enough to meet and insult you, how will you reply to him in the Assembly?

Prax.—I will say he is crazed.

1st Wom.—But this they all know.

Prax.—But also that he is melancholy-mad.

1st Wom.—This too they know.

Prax.—But also that he tinkers his pots badly, but the state well and prettily.

1st Wom.—How then, if Neoclides the blear-eyed insults you?

Prax.—Him I bid count the hairs on a dog's tail.

1st Wom.—How then, if they knock you?

Prax.—I'll knock again; since I am not unused to many knocks.

1st Wom.—That thing alone is unconsidered, what in the world you will do, if the policemen try to drag you away?

Prax.—(Suiting the action to the word.) I'll nudge with the elbow in this way; for I will never be caught by the middle.

1st Wom.—And if they lift you up, we will bid them let you alone.

2d Wom.—This has been well considered by us. But that we have not thought of, how we shall remember then to hold up our hands.

Prax.—The thing is difficult: but nevertheless we must hold up our hands, having bared one arm up to the shoulder. Come then, gird up your tunics; and put on your Laconian shoes as soon as possible, as you always see your husbands do, when they are about to go to the Assembly or out of doors. And then, when all these matters are well, tie on your beards. And when you shall have arranged them precisely, having them fitted on, put on also your husbands' garments, which you stole; and then go, leaning on your staffs, singing some old man's song, imitating the manner of the country people.

2d Wom.—You say well. But let us (to those next her) go before them; for I fancy other women also will come forthwith from the country to the Pnyx.

Præ.—Come, hasten! for it is the custom there for those who are not present at the Pnyx at daybreak, to skulk away, having not even a doit. (The women advance into the orchestra, and there form themselves into a chorus.)

Chorus.—It is time for us to advance, O men,—for this we ought mindfully to be always repeating, so that it may never escape our memories. For the danger is not trifling, if we be caught entering upon so great an enterprise in secret. Let us go to the assembly, O men; for the Thesmothetes threatened that whoever should not come at dawn very early, in haste, looking sharp and sour, content with garlic-pickle, he would not give him the three obols.

Come, O Charitimides, and Smicythus, and Draces, follow in haste, taking heed to yourself that you blunder in none of those things which you ought to effect. But see that, when we have received our ticket, we then sit down near each other, so that we may vote for all measures, as many as it behooves our sisterhood. And yet, what am I saying? for I ought to have called them "brotherhood."

But see that we jostle those who have come from the city; as many as heretofore, when a person had to receive only one obolus on his coming, used to sit and chatter, crowned with chaplets. But now they are a great nuisance. But when the brave Myronides held office, no one used to dare to conduct the affairs of the state for the receipt of money; but each of them used to come with drink in a little wine-skin, and bread at the same time, and two onions besides, and three olives. But now, like people carrying clay, they seek to get three obols, whenever they transact any public business.

Blepyrus.—(Coming out of his house attired in his wife's petticoat and shoes.) What's the matter? Whither in the world is my wife gone? for it is now near morning, and she does not appear. I have been lying this long while wanting to ease myself, seeking to find my shoes and my garment in the dark. And when now, on groping after it, I was not able to find it, but he, Sir-reverence, now continued to knock at

the door, I take this kerchief of my wife's, and I trall along her Persian slippers. But where, where could one ease himself in an unfrequented place? or is every place a good place by night? for now no one will see me easing myself. Ah me, miserable! because I married a wife, being an old man. How many stripes I deserve to get! For she never went out to do any good. But nevertheless I must certainly go aside to ease myself.

A Neighbor.—(Coming forward.) Who is it? Surely it is not Blepyrus my neighbor? Yes, by Jove! 'tis he himself assuredly. (Goes up to him.) Tell me, what means this yellow color? Cinesias has not, I suppose, befouled you somehow?

Blep.—No; but I have come out with my wife's little saffron-colored robe on, which she is accustomed to put on.

Neigh.—But where is your garment?

Blep.—I can't tell. For when I looked for it, I did not find it in the bedclothes.

Neigh.—Then did you not even bid your wife tell you?

Blep.—No, by Jove! for she does not happen to be within, but has slipped out from the house without my knowledge. For which reason also I fear lest she be doing some mischief.

Neigh.—By Neptune, then you've suffered exactly the same as I; for she I live with, is gone with the garment I used to wear. And this is not the only thing which troubles me; but she has also taken my shoes. Therefore I was not able to find them anywhere.

Blep.—By Bacchus, neither could I my Laconian shoes! but as I wanted to ease myself, I put my feet into my wife's buskins and am hastening, in order that I might not befoul the blanket, for it was clean-washed.

Neigh.—What then can it be? Has some woman among her friends invited her to breakfast?

Blep.—In my opinion it is so. She's certainly not an ill body, as far as I know.

Neigh.—Come, you are as long about it as the rope of a draw-well. It is time for me to go to the Assembly, if I find my garment, the only one I had.

Blep.—And I too, as soon as I shall have eased myself. But now a wild pear seems to have obstructed my bowels.

Neigh.—It is the wild pear which Thrasybulus spoke of to the Spartans?
(Exit.)

Blep.—By Bacchus, at any rate it clings very tight to me. But what shall I do? for not even is this the only thing which troubles me; but to know where the dung will go to in future, when I eat. For now this Achradusian, whoever in the world he is, has bolted the door. Who then will go for a doctor for me? and which one? Which of the breech-professors is clever in his art? Does Amynon know it? But perhaps he will deny it. Let some one summon Antisthenes by all means. For this man, so far as groans are concerned, knows what a breech wanting to ease itself means. O mistress Ilithyia, do not suffer me to be burst or shut up! lest I become a comic night-stool.

(Enter Chremes.)

Chremes.—Hollo you! what are you doing? You are not easing yourself, I suppose?

Blep.—I? Certainly not any longer, by Jove; but am rising up.

Chrem.—Have you your wife's smock on?

Blep.—Yes, for in the dark I chanced to find this in the house. But whence have you come, pray?

Chrem.—From the Assembly.

Blep.—Why, is it dismissed already?

Chrem.—Nay, rather, by Jove, at dawn. And indeed the vermillion, O dearest Jove! which they threw about on all sides, afforded much laughter.

Blep.—Then did you get your three obols?

Chrem.—Would I had! But now I came too late; so that I am ashamed . . . By Jove, I have brought nothing else but my pouch.

Blep.—But what was the reason?

Chrem.—A very great crowd of men, as never at any time came all at once to the Pynx. And indeed, when we saw them, we compared them all to shoemakers: for the Assembly was

marvellously filled with white to look at. So that neither I myself nor many others got anything.

Blep.—Shouldn't I then get anything, if I went now?

Chrem.—By no means: not even, by Jove, if you went then, when the cock crowed the second time.

Blep.—Ah me, wretched! "O Antilochus, loudly bewail me who live, more than the three obols:" for I am undone. But what was the cause, that so vast a crowd was assembled so early?

Chrem.—What else, but that the Prytanes determined to bring forward a motion concerning the safety of the state? And then forthwith the blear-eyed Neoclides first crept forward. And then you can't think how the people bawled out, "Is it not shameful, that this fellow should dare to harangue the people, and that too when the question is concerning safety, who did not save his own eyelashes?" And he cried aloud and looked around and said, "What then ought I to have done?"

Blep.—If I had happened to be present, I would have said, "Pound together garlic with fig-juice and put in Laconian spurge, and anoint your eye-lids with it at night."

Chrem.—After him the very clever Evæon came forward, naked, as appeared to most—he himself, however, said he had on a tunic—and then delivered a most democratic speech. "You see me, myself also, in want of safety of the value of four staters. Yet, nevertheless, I will tell you how you shall save the state and the citizens. For if the fullers furnish cloaks to those in want, as soon as ever the sun turns, a pleurisy would never seize any of us. And as many as have no bed or bed-clothes, let them go to the tanners to sleep after they have been washed. But if he shut them out with the door when it is winter, let him have to pay three goatskins."

Blep.—By Bacchus, an excellent plan! But if he had added that—no one would have voted against it—that the meal-hucksters should furnish three chœnixes as supper to all those in want, or suffer smartly for it; that they might have derived this benefit from Nausicydes.

Chrem.—After this then a handsome, fair-faced youth, like to Nicias, jumped up to harangue the people, and essayed to

speaking, to the intent that we ought to commit the state to the women. And then the mob of shoemakers cheered and cried out, that he spoke well: but those from the country grumbled loudly.

Blep.—For, by Jove, they had sense.

Chrem.—But they were the weaker party; while he persevered in his clamor, saying much good of the women, but much ill of you.

Blep.—Why, what did he say?

Chrem.—First he said you were a knave.

Blep.—And of you?

Chrem.—Don't ask this yet. And then a thief.

Blep.—I only?

Chrem.—And, by Jove, an informer, too.

Blep.—I only?

Chrem.—And, by Jove, the greater part of these here.

(Points to the audience.)

Blep.—Who denies this?

Chrem.—A woman, on the other hand, he said was a clever and money-getting thing; and he said they did not constantly divulge the secrets of the Thesmophoria, while you and I always did so when we were senators.

Blep.—And, by Mercury, in this he did not lie!

Chrem.—Then he said they lent to each other garments, gold, silver, drinking-cups, all alone, not in the presence of witnesses: and that they returned all these, and did not keep them back; while most of us, he said, did so.

Blep.—Yes, by Neptune, in the presence of witnesses!

Chrem.—That they did not act the informer, did not bring actions, nor put down the democracy; but he praised the women for many good qualities, and for very many other reasons.

Blep.—What then was decreed?

Chrem.—To commit the state to them. For this plan alone appeared not to have been tried as yet in the state.

Blep.—And has it been decreed?

Chrem.—Certainly.

Blep.—And have all matters been committed to them, which used to be a care to the citizens?

Chrem.—So it is.

Blep.—Then shall I not go to Court, but my wife?

Chrem.—No, nor any longer shall you rear the children you have, but your wife.

Blep.—Nor any longer is it my business to groan at day-break?

Chrem.—No; by Jove! but this now is the women's care; while you shall remain at home without groans.

Blep.—That thing is alarming for such as us; lest, when they have received the government of the state, they then compel us by force——

Chrem.—What to do?

Blep.—To do domestic duty.

Chrem.—But what if we be not able.

Blep.—They will not give us our breakfast.

Chrem.—Do you, by Jove, manage this, that you may breakfast and amuse yourself at the same time.

Blep.—Compulsion is most dreadful.

Chrem.—But if this shall be profitable for the state, every man ought to do so. Certainly indeed there is a saying of our elders, "Whatever senseless or silly measures we determine on, that they all turn out for our advantage." And may they turn out so, O mistress Pallas and ye gods! But I will depart: and fare-you-well. (Exit Chremes.)

Blep.—And you too farewell, O Chremes!

(Goes into his house.)

Chorus of Women.—Advance, proceed! Is there any of the men that is following us? Turn about! look! guard yourself carefully—for knaves are numerous—lest perchance someone being behind us, should espy our dress. But step along, stamping with your feet as much as possible. This affair would bring disgrace upon us all among the men, if it were discovered. Wherefore gird yourself up, and look about in that direction

and on the right, lest the affair shall become a mishap. Come, let us hasten! for we are now near the place, whence we set out to the Assembly, when we went there: and we may see the house, whence is our general, who devised the measure which has now been decreed by the citizens. Wherefore it is fitting that we do not loiter waiting longer, equipped with beards, lest some one shall see us, and perhaps denounce us. But come hither to the shade, having come to the wall, glancing aside with one eye, change your dress again as you were before, and do not loiter: for see here! now we behold our general coming from the Assembly. Come, hasten every one, and hate to have a beard on your jaws. For see! they have come with this dress on this long while.

Enter Praxagora and other women from the Assembly, no longer disguised as men.

Praxagora.—(Addressing the chorus.) These measures, O women, which we deliberated on, have turned out successfully. But throw off your cloaks as soon as possible, before any of the men see you! let the men's shoes go far away! undo the fastened Laconian shoe-strings! throw away your staffs! And do you now (to a female servant) put them in order. I wish to creep in secretly, before my husband sees me, and deposit his garment again whence I took it, and the other things which I brought out.

Cho.—Now all the things you spoke of are lying in order. It is your business to instruct us in the rest, by doing what useful thing we shall seem rightly to obey you. For I know I have conversed with no woman cleverer than you.

Prax.—Wait then, in order that I may use you all as advisers in the office to which I have been just now elected. For there, in the uproar and danger, you have been most courageous.

Blep.—(Suddenly coming out of his house.) Ho you! whence have you come, Praxagora?

Prax.—What's that to you, my dear?

Blep.—"What's that to me?" How foolishly you ask.

Prax.—You certainly will not say from a paramour.

Blep.—Perhaps not from one.

Prax.—Well now you can put this to the test.

Blep.—How?

Prax.—If my head smells of perfume.

Blep.—How then? does not a women intrigue even without perfume?

Prax.—I, unhappy, certainly not.

Blep.—Why then did you go off at daybreak in silence with my garment?

Prax.—A woman, my companion and friend, sent for me in the night, being in the pains of labor.

Blep.—And then was it not possible for you to go when you had told me?

Prax.—And not to care for the woman in child-bed, being in such a condition, husband?

Blep.—Yes, if you had told me. But there is some mischief in this.

Prax.—Nay, by the two goddesses! but I went just as I was; for she who came in quest of me, begged me to set out by all means.

Blep.—Then ought you not to have worn your own garment? But after you had stripped me, and thrown your upper garment over me, you went off and left me as if I were laid out for burial; only that you did not crown me, nor yet place a vase beside me.

Prax.—For it was cold; while I am thin and weak. So then I put it on, in order that I might be warm. But I left you lying in the warmth, and in the bedclothes, husband.

Blep.—But with what view went my Laconian shoes and my staff along with you?

Prax.—I changed shoes with you, in order that I might keep the garment safe, imitating you, and stamping with my feet, and striking the stones with the staff.

Blep.—Do you know then that you have lost a sextary of wheat, which I ought to have received from the Assembly?

Prax.—Don't be concerned; for she has borne a male child.

Blep.—The Assembly?

Prax.—No, by Jove! but the woman I went to. But has it been held?

Blep.—Yes, by Jove! Did you not know that I told you yesterday?

Prax.—I just now recollect it.

Blep.—Then don't you know what has been decreed?

Prax.—No, by Jove! not I.

Blep.—Then sit down and chew cuttle-fish; for they say the state has been committed to you.

Prax.—What to do? to weave?

Blep.—No, by Jove! but to rule.

Prax.—What?

Blep.—The affairs of the state, every one.

Prax.—By Venus, the state will be happy henceforth!

Blep.—On what account?

Prax.—For many reasons. For no longer will it be permitted for the audacious to act shamefully toward it henceforth, and nowhere to give evidence, nor to act the informer—

Blep.—By the gods, by no means do this, nor take away my livelihood.

Oho.—My good sir, suffer your wife to speak.

Prax.—Nor to steal clothes, nor to envy one's neighbors, nor to be naked, nor that any one be poor, nor to rail at one another, nor to seize as a pledge and carry off.

Oho.—By Neptune, grand promises, if she shall not prove false.

Prax.—But I will demonstrate this, so that you shall bear me witness, and this man himself not gainsay me at all.

Oho.—Now it behooves you to rouse a prudent mind and deep thought friendly to the commons, who know how to defend your friends. For your inventiveness of mind comes for the public prosperity, delighting the commons with innumerable aids for life, showing what it is able to effect. It is time: for our state has need of some clever contrivance. Come, do you only accomplish what has never been done nor mentioned

before as yet. For they hate, if they see the old things often. Come, you ought not to delay, but now to begin your plans; for quickness enjoys the greatest share of favor with the spectators.

Praz.—Well now, I am confident that I shall teach what is useful. But this is the thing I am most apprehensive about, whether the spectators will be willing to make innovations, and not rather abide by the very customary and ancient usages.

Blep.—Now about making innovations, don't be alarmed; for to do this and to neglect what is ancient, is with us equivalent to another constitution.

Praz.—Now let none of you reply or interrupt me, before he understands the plan and has heard the speaker. For I will declare that all ought to enjoy all things in common, and live upon the same property; and not for one to be rich, and another miserably poor; nor one to cultivate much land, and another to have not even enough to be buried in; nor one to have many slaves, and another not even a footman. But I will make one common subsistence for all, and that too equal.

Blep.—How then will it be common to all?

Praz.—You shall eat dung before me.

Blep.—And shall we have a community of dung?

Praz.—No, by Jove! but you were the first to interrupt me. For I was going to say this: I will first of all make the land common to all, and the silver, and the other things, as many as each has. Then we will maintain you out of these, being common, husbanding, and sparing, and giving our attention to it.

Blep.—How then if any of us do not possess land, but silver and Darics, personal property.

Praz.—He shall pay it in for the public use; and if he do not pay it in, he shall be forsworn.

Blep.—Why, he acquired it by this!

Praz.—But in truth it will be of no use to him at all.

Blep.—On what account, pray?

Praz.—No one will do any wickedness through poverty: for all will be possessed of all things; loaves, slices of salt

fish, barley cakes, cloaks, wine, chaplets, chick-pease. So that what advantage will it be not to pay it in? For do you find it out and make it known.

Blep.—Then do not these even now thief more, who have these worldly goods?

Praz.—Yes; formerly, my good sir, when we used the former laws. But now—for substance shall be in common—what is the advantage in not paying in?

Blep.—If on seeing a girl one should fall in love with her, he will be able to make presents by taking from these; but he will enjoy a share of the common property by cohabiting with her.

Praz.—But he will be permitted thus to do for nothing; for I will make them in common for the men, and for any one that pleases to beget children.

Blep.—How then, if all shall go to the most beautiful of them?

Praz.—The uglier and more flat-nosed women shall sit by the side of the beautiful; and their desires will have to be consulted first.

Blep.—Your plan has some sense; for it has been provided that no woman's arms be empty. But what will the men do? For the women will avoid the more ugly ones, and go to the handsome.

Praz.—But the uglier men shall watch for the handsomer ones as they are departing from dinner, and shall have an eye upon them in the public places. And the women shall not be permitted with the handsome men before they have consulted the desires of the ugly and little ones.

Blep.—Then the nose of Lysicrates will now be as proud as that of the handsome men.

Praz.—Yes, by Apollo! And the plan will be a democratic one too, and a great mockery of the more dignified and of those who wear rings.

Blep.—How then, if we live in this manner, will each be able to distinguish his own sons?

Pras.—But what occasion is there? for they will consider all those who are older than themselves in age to be their fathers.

Blep.—Therefore they will rightly and properly throttle every old man one after another through ignorance; for even now, when they know their true father, they throttle him. What then? when he is unknown, how will they not then even dung upon him?

Pras.—But he who is standing by will not permit it. Formerly they had no concern about other people's fathers, if any one beat them; whereas now, if any hear a father beaten, being alarmed lest any person should be beating his father, he will oppose those who do this.

Blep.—The rest you say not amiss. But if Epicurus were to come to me, or Leucolophas, and call me father, this now would be terrible to hear.

Pras.—A much more terrible thing, however, than this thing is—

Blep.—What?

Pras.—If Aristyllus were to kiss you, saying you were his father.

Blep.—He would suffer for it and howl.

Pras.—And you would smell of mint. But he was born before the decree was made, so there is no fear lest he kiss you.

Blep.—I should indeed have suffered a terrible thing. But who is to cultivate the land?

Pras.—The slaves. But it shall be your concern, when the shadow of the gnomon is ten feet long, to go to a banquet, anointed with oil.

Blep.—But about garments, what will be your contrivance? For this also must be asked.

Pras.—In the first place what you have at present will be at hand, and the rest we will weave.

Blep.—One thing further I ask: if one be cast in a suit before the magistrates at the suit of any one, from what source will he pay off this? For it is not right to pay it out of the common fund.

Prax.—But in the first place there shall not even be any suits.

Blep.—But how many this will ruin!

Prax.—I also make a decree for this. For on what account, you rogue, should there be any.

Blep.—By Apollo, for many reasons! in the first place, for one reason, I ween, if any one, being in debt, denies it.

Prax.—Whence then did the lender lend the money, when all things are common? He is, I ween, convicted of theft.

Blep.—By Ceres, you instruct us well! Now let some one tell me this: whence shall those who beat people pay off an action for assault, when they insult people after a banquet? For I fancy you'll be at a loss about this.

Prax.—Out of the barley-cake which he eats. For when one diminishes this, he will not insult again so readily, after he has been punished in his belly.

Blep.—And, on the other hand, will there be no thief?

Prax.—Why, how shall he steal when he has a share of all things?

Blep.—Then will they not even strip people by night?

Prax.—Not, if you sleep—at home; nor, if you sleep abroad, as they used before. For all shall have subsistence. And if any one tries to strip a person, he shall give them of his own accord. For what occasion is there for him to resist? for he shall go and get another better than that from the common stock?

Blep.—Then will the men not even play at dice?

Prax.—Why, for what stake shall any one do this?

Blep.—What will you make our mode of life?

Prax.—Common to all. For I say I will make the city one house, having broken up all into one; so that they may go into each other's houses.

Blep.—But where will you serve up the dinner?

Prax.—I will make the law-courts and the porticoes wholly men's apartments.

Blep.—What use will the Bema be to you?

Prax.—I will set the mixers and the water-pots on it; and it shall be for the boys to sing of those who are brave in war, and of him, whoever has been cowardly, so that they may not dine, through shame.

Blep.—By Apollo, a nice plan! But what will you make of the urns for the lots?

Prax.—I will deposit them in the market-place; and then I will place all the people beside the statue of Harmodius and choose them by lot, until he who has drawn the lot departs joyfully, knowing in what letter he is to dine. And the crier shall command those of Beta to follow to the royal portico to dine; and Theta to the portico next this; and those of Kappa to go to the flour-market.

Blep.—That they may gobble up the flour?

Prax.—No, by Jove! but that they may dine there.

Blep.—But whoever has not the necessary letter drawn, according to which he is to dine, all will drive away.

Prax.—But it shall not be so with us. For we will supply all things to all in abundance; so that every one when he is drunk shall go home together with his chaplet, having taken his torch. And the women in the thoroughfares, meeting with them coming from dinner, will solicit them, the ugly women first. And the uglier men following the handsome men and the youths will say as follows: "Hollo, you! whither are you running? You will effect nothing at all by going: for it has been decreed for the flat-nosed and the ugly to make first choice; but that you in the meantime amuse yourself in the porch." Come, now, tell me, do these please you?

Blep.—Very much.

Prax.—Then I must go to the market place, that I may receive the public revenue, having taken a clear-voiced female-crier. For it is necessary that I do this, as I have been chosen to govern, and that I arrange the messes, so that in the first place you may banquet to-day.

Blep.—Why, shall we banquet forthwith?

Prax.—Certainly. In the next place, I wish to put a stop to the harlots every one.

Blep.—Wherefore?

Prax.—This is plain: that these of ours may not be deprived of choice. And it is not proper that the women-slaves should deck themselves out and filch away the love of the free women, but should cohabit only with the men-slaves, with their persons marked like a slave.

Blep.—Come now, let me follow you close by, that I may be gazed at, and that people may say as follows: "Do you not admire this husband of our general?"

(*Exeunt Praxagora and Blepyrus.*)

1st Citizen.—I will make ready and overhaul my substance, in order that I may carry my chattels to the market-place. Do you, O Meal-sieve, pretty as you are, come hither prettily out of the house the first of my goods, so that you may be a Basket-bearer, being powdered with meal, who hast overturned many bags of mine.

Where is the Stool-carrier? Pot, come forth hither! By Jove, you are black! nor could you have been blacker if you had boiled the dye with which Lysicrates blackens his hair. Come hither, Tire-woman, stand next her! Water-bearer, here! bring hither this water-pot! And do you, Harper, come forth hither! who have often wakened me in the dead of the night for the Assembly with your early strain. Let him with a hive come forth! Bring the honeycombs! Place the olive-wreaths near! and bring out the two tripods, and the oil-flask. Now leave the little pots and the lumber."

2d Citizen.—(Grumbling to himself.) Shall I pay in my property? Then I shall be a wretched man and possessed of little sense. No, by Neptune, never! but will first scrutinize and examine them frequently. For I will not so foolishly throw away my earnings and savings for nothing, before I learn the whole matter, how it is. Hollo you! what mean these chattels? Have you brought them out because you are flitting or are you carrying them to put them in pawn. '

1st Cit.—By no means.

2d Cit.—Why then are they thus in a row? Surely you are not leading a procession in honor of Hiero the acutioneer?

1st Cit.—No, by Jove! but I am about to deliver them into

the market-place for the good of the state, conformably to the laws enacted.

2d Ctt.—Art going to deliver them in?

1st Ctt.—Certainly.

2d Ctt.—Then you are an unhappy man, by Jove the Preserver!

1st Ctt.—How?

2d Ctt.—How? Easily.

1st Ctt.—How then? ought I not obey the laws?

2d Ctt.—What laws, you unhappy man?

1st Ctt.—Those enacted.

2d Ctt.—Enacted? How silly you are then!

1st Ctt.—Silly?

2d Ctt.—Certainly.—Nay, rather, the most foolish of all together.

1st Ctt.—Because I do what is ordered?

2d Ctt.—Why, ought a sensible man to do what is ordered?

1st Ctt.—Most assuredly.

2d Ctt.—Nay, rather, a stupid man.

1st Ctt.—And do you not intend to pay them in?

2d Ctt.—I'll take care not, till I see what the people determine on.

1st Ctt.—Why, what else but that they are ready to carry their property?

2d Ctt.—Well, I'd believe if I saw.

1st Ctt.—At any rate they talk of it in the streets.

2d Ctt.—Why, they will talk of it.

1st Ctt.—And they say they will take them up and carry them.

2d Ctt.—Why, they will say so.

1st Ctt.—You will kill me with disbelieving everything.

2d Ctt.—Why, they will disbelieve you.

1st Ctt.—May Jove destroy you!

2d Ctt.—Why, they will destroy you. Do you think any of them who has sense will carry his property? For this is not

a national custom; but, by Jove, we ought only to receive. For the gods also do so. But you will perceive that from the hands of the statues: for when we pray to them to give us blessings, they stand extending the hand with the hollow uppermost, not as about to give anything, but that they may receive something.

1st Cit.—You wretch, let me do something useful; for these must be bound together. Where is my thong?

2d Cit.—Why, will you really carry them?

1st Cit.—Yes, by Jove! and now indeed I am binding together these two tripods.

2d Cit.—What folly! To think of your not waiting for the others to see what they will do, and then at this point at length—

1st Cit.—Do what?

2d Cit.—Continue waiting; and then to tarry yet longer.

1st Cit.—For what purpose, pray?

2d Cit.—If perchance an earthquake were to take place, or a horrible meteor, or a weasel were to dart across the marketplace, they would stop carrying, you gaping fool.

1st Cit.—At any rate I should be nicely off, if I did not know where to pay these in.

2d Cit.—See lest you do not know where you could take them to. Be of good courage! you shall pay them in, even if you go on the last day of the month.

1st Cit.—Why?

2d Cit.—I know that they vote for a thing quickly, and again deny whatever they have decreed.

1st Cit.—They will carry them, my friend.

2d Cit.—But what if they do not bring them?

1st Cit.—Never mind, they'll bring them.

2d Cit.—But what if they do not bring them?

1st Cit.—I'll battle with them.

2d Cit.—But what if they get the better of you?

1st Cit.—I'll leave the things and go away.

2d Cit.—But what if they sell them?

1st Ctt.—Split you!

2d Ctt.—But what if I split?

1st Ctt.—You'll do right.

2d Ctt.—And will you be eager to carry them?

1st Ctt.—I shall; for I see my own neighbors carrying theirs.

2d Ctt.—Antisthenes to be sure will certainly bring them in. It would be much more agreeable to him to ease himself first for more than thirty days.

1st Ctt.—Plague take you!

2d Ctt.—And what will Callimachus the chorus-master contribute to them?

1st Ctt.—More than Callias.

2d Ctt.—This man will throw away his property.

1st Ctt.—You say strange things.

2d Ctt.—What is there strange? as if I was not always seeing such decrees taking place. Don't you know that decree which was determined on about the salt?

1st Ctt.—I do.

2d Ctt.—Don't you know when we voted for those copper coins?

1st Ctt.—Aye, and that coinage was a loss to me. For I sold some bunches of grapes and went away with my mouth full of copper coins. And then I went to the market-place for some barley-meal. Then, just as I was holding my bag under for the meal, the crier proclaimed that "henceforth no one take copper, for we use silver."

2d Ctt.—And were we not all lately swearing that the state would have five hundred talents from the tax of one-fortieth, which Euripides devised? and immediately every man was for plastering Euripides with gold. But as soon as on examining it, it appeared to be "Jove's Corinth," and the measure did not suffice, every man again was for plastering Euripides with pitch.

1st Ctt.—The case is not the same, my good sir. At that time we were rulers, but now the women.

2d Cit.—Whom I'll be on my guard against, by Neptune, lest they insult and disgrace me.

1st Cit.—I don't know what you're babbling about. (To his servant.) Boy, carry the yoke!

Enter a female crier.

Crier.—O all ye citizens—for so this is now—come, hasten straight to our Princess-President, in order that chance may point out to you, drawing lots man by man, where you shall dine; for the tables are piled up and furnished with all good things, and the couches are heaped with goatskins and carpets. They are mixing goblets; the female-perfumers are standing in order; the slices of salt-fish are boiling; they are spitting the hare's flesh; cakes are baking; chaplets are plaiting; sweet-meats are toasting; the youngest women are boiling pots of pea-soup; and Smolus amongst them with a Knight's uniform on is cleansing thoroughly the women's cups. And Geron comes with a cloak on and light sandals, laughing loudly with another youth; and his shoes lie uncared for, and his thread-bare coat is thrown off. Wherefore come! for he who carries the barley-cake is standing. Come, open your mouths!

(Exit.)

2d Cit.—Therefore I will certainly go. For why do I keep standing here, when these things have been decreed by the state?

1st Cit.—Why, whither will you go, if you have not paid in your property?

2d Cit.—To dinner.

1st Cit.—Certainly not, if there be any sense in them, until you deliver in your property.

2d Cit.—Well, I will deliver it in.

1st Cit.—When?

2d Cit.—I shall not be a hindrance, my good sir.

1st Cit.—How, pray?

2d Cit.—I assert that others will deliver in their property still later than I.

1st Cit.—But will you go to dinner notwithstanding?

2d Ctt.—Why what must I do? for it behooves those who have right understanding to assist the state to the best of their ability.

1st Ctt.—But what if they hinder you?

2d Ctt.—I'll join battle with them with my head bent forward.

1st Ctt.—But what if they whip you?

2d Ctt.—I'll summon them.

1st Ctt.—But what if they laugh at you?

2d Ctt.—Standing at the doors—

1st Ctt.—What will you do? Tell me!

2d Ctt.—I'll snatch away the victuals from those who are carrying them in.

1st Ctt.—Then go too late! Do you, Sicon and Parmeno, take up my entire property.

2d Ctt.—Come then, let me help you to carry them.

1st Ctt.—No, by no means! For I am afraid lest you lay claim to my property even before the Princess-President, when I pay it in. (Exit with his servants.)

2d Ctt.—By Jove, of a truth I have need of some contrivance, so that I may retain the property I have, and may somehow partake in common with these of the things which are kneading. It seems to me to be just. I must go to the same place to dine, and must not delay. (Exit.)

1st Old Woman.—Why in the world are the men not come? it has been time this long while: for I am standing idle, painted over with white lead, and clad in a saffron-colored robe, and humming a tune to myself, playing amorously, in order that I may catch some of them as he is passing by. Ye Muses, come hither to my mouth, having devised some Ionian ditty.

Young Woman.—(Looking out from an opposite window.) Now you've been beforehand with me in peeping out, you ugly old woman; and you thought you would strip unwatched vines, as I was not present here, and allure someone by singing. But I'll sing against you, if you do this. For even if this be tire-

some to the spectators, nevertheless it has something amusing in it and belonging to comedy.

(An ugly old man crosses the stage.)

1st Old Wom.—(Pointing to the old man.) Converse with this old man, and retire with him! But do you, my little darling of a flute-player, take your flute and accompany me with a tune worthy of me and of you. (Sings to the flute.) "If any one wishes to experience some good, he should choose me. For knowledge is not in young women, but in the ripe ones: nor would any of them be willing to love more than I the friend I might choose; but she would fly off to another."

Young Wom.—Do not envy the young women. For pleasure is in their tender limbs, and blossoms on their bosoms: while you, old woman, have had your eyebrows polled, and have been painted, an object of love for Orcus.

1st Old Wom.—May your teeth drop out, and may you lose your couch when wishing to be caressed, and may you find your choice a serpent, and draw it toward you, wishing to kiss it.

Young Wom.—(Sings.) "Alas! alas! what ever shall I do? my friend is not come, and I am left here alone: for my mother has gone elsewhere; and as for the rest, these I must make of no account. Come, O nurse, I beseech you, summon Orthagoras as your choice, I entreat you."

1st Old Wom.—(Sings.) "Already, you wretch, you are prurient in the Ionian manner, and you appear to me also a Labda after the fashion of the Lesbians. But you will never flch away my darling; and you shall not spoil or intercept my chance."

Young Wom.—Sing as much as you please, and peep out like a weasel; for no one will sooner come to you than me.

1st Old Wom.—Then is it not for your burial?

Young Wom.—It would be a strange thing, you old woman.

1st Old Wom.—Certainly not.

Young Wom.—Why, how could one tell anything new to an old woman?

1st Old Wom.—My old age won't distress you.

Young Wom.—What then? your alkanet, rather, and your white lead?

1st Old Wom.—Why do you talk to me?

Young Wom.—And why do you peep out?

1st Old Wom.—I? I am singing to myself in honor of my friend Epigenes.

Young Wom.—Why, have you any other friend than Geres?

1st Old Wom.—He'll show you; for he will come to me presently. For see! there he is himself!

(A young man is seen at a distance.)

Young Wom.—He is not wanting any thing with you, you pest.

1st Old Wom.—Yes, by Jove, you skinny jade!

Young Wom.—He himself will soon show; for I will go away. (Retires from the window.)

1st Old Wom.—And I, too, that you may know that I am much wiser than you. (Retires from the window.)

Enter a young man crowned with flowers, and bearing a torch.

Young Man.—Would it were permitted to choose the young girl, and one was not obliged first to prefer a snub-nosed or elderly one. For this is intolerable to a free man.

1st Old Wom.—(Peeping out and talking aside.) Then, by Jove, you'll act to your cost! For these are not the times of Charixene. You are bound to do this in conformity with the law, if we are under a democratic government. But I'll withdraw to watch what in the world he will do.

(Retires again.)

Young Man.—O ye gods, may I find my beautiful one alone, to whom I am coming drunk, desiring to meet her this long while.

Young Wom.—(Cautiously peeping out.) I have deceived the accursed old woman; for she is gone, thinking that I would remain within.

1st Old Wom.—(Peeping out.) Nay, this is he himself, of whom I made mention. (Sings.) "Come, hither, pray! Come hither, pray, my beloved! come hither to me! and see that

you prefer me. For love of these curls of yours agitates me exceedingly; and marvelous desire assails me, which has worn me away. Permit me, Love, I beseech thee, and make him give me preference."

Young Man.—(Standing under the young woman's window and singing.) "Come, hither, pray! come hither, pray! and do thou run down and open this door; otherwise I will fall down and lie here. My beloved, come, I wish to be with thee. O Venus, wherefore dost thou make me mad after her? Permit me, Love, I beseech thee, and make her come to me. And this has been mentioned sufficiently for my anguish. But do thou, my dearest, oh, I beseech thee, open to me, embrace me! Through thee I suffer pains. O my beloved object decked with gold, child of Venus, the Muse's honey-bee, nursing of the Graces, Beauty's face, open to me, embrace me! Through thee I suffer pains."

1st Old Wom.—(Suddenly coming out.) Ho you! why do you knock? Do you seek me?

Young Man.—By no means.

1st Old Wom.—And yet you knocked furiously at the door.

Young Man.—Then may I die, if I did.

1st Old Wom.—In want of whom, then, have you come with a torch?

Young Man.—In search of a certain Anaphlystian.

1st Old Wom.—What man?

Young Man.—Not your Sebinus, whom you perhaps expect.

1st Old Wom.—(Seizing him by the arm.) Yes, by Venus! whether you wish it or no.

Young Man.—But we are not now bringing into court those above sixty years old; but have adjourned them to another time. For we are judging those under twenty years.

1st Old Wom.—This was in the time of the former government, my sweet. But now it is decreed to bring in us first.

Young Man.—Yes, for him that pleases to do so, after the manner of the law at draughts.

1st Old Wom.—But not even do you dine according to the law at draughts.

Young Man.—I don't know what you mean. I must knock at this door.

1st Old Wom.—Yes, when you shall have first knocked at my door.

Young Man.—But I am not now asking for a bolting-sieve.

1st Old Wom.—I know that I am loved: but now you are astonished that you found me out of doors. Come, put forward your lips.

Young Man.—Nay, my dear, I am afraid of your lover.

1st Old Wom.—Whom?

Young Man.—The best of painters.

1st Old Wom.—But who is he?

Young Man.—He that paints the vases for the dead. But go away! that he may not see you at the door.

1st Old Wom.—I know, I know what you wish.

Young Man.—For I also, by Jove, know you!

1st Old Wom.—By Venus, who obtained me by lot, I will not let you go.

Young Man.—You are mad, old woman.

1st Old Wom.—You talk foolishly; for I will compel you to choose me.

Young Man.—Why then should we purchase hooks for our buckets, when it is in one's power, by letting down such an old woman as this, to draw up the buckets from the wells?

1st Old Wom.—Do not jeer me, you wretch, but follow this way to my house.

Young Man.—But there is no necessity for me, unless you have paid in to the state the five-hundredth of your—years.

1st Old Wom.—By Venus, yet you must! for I delight in the company of men so young as you.

Young Man.—But I abominate the company of women so old as you; and I will never comply.

1st Old Wom.—(Producing a paper.) But, by Jove, this shall compel you!

Young Man.—And what is this?

1st Old Wom.—A decree, according to which you must come to me.

Young Man.—Read whatever in the world it is.

1st Old Wom.—Well now, I read it. (Reads.) "It has been decreed by the women that, if a young man be in love with a young woman, he shall not choose her before he shall have first chosen the old woman. But if he be not willing first to choose the old woman, but desire the young woman, be it permitted for the elderly women to lay hold of him, and to drag the young man with impunity.

Young Man.—Ah me! to-day I shall become a Proustes.

1st Old Wom.—Yes; for you must obey our laws.

Young Man.—But how, if a tribesman of mine, or one of my friends, comes and rescues me?

1st Old Wom.—But no man is any longer authorized beyond a medimnus of corn.

Young Man.—But is there no swearing off?

1st Old Wom.—No; for there is no occasion for shuffling.

Young Man.—But I'll pretend to be a merchant.

1st Old Wom.—Aye, to your cost.

Young Man.—What then must I do?

1st Old Wom.—Follow this way to my house.

Young Man.—Why, is there a necessity for me to do this?

1st Old Wom.—Aye, a Diomedean necessity.

Young Man.—Then first strew me some origanum underneath, and break off and place under four vine-twigs, and wear a tænia, and place beside you the vases, and set down the earthen vessel of water before your door.

1st Old Wom.—(Sarcastically.) Assuredly you will moreover buy me a chaplet too!

Young Man.—Yes, by Jove! if it be of the waxen sort; for I fancy you will immediately fall in pieces.

Young Wom.—(Suddenly coming out of the house.) Whither are you dragging this man?

1st Old Wom.—I am leading in mine own.

Young Wom.—Not discreetly: for he is not of the age for you, being so young; since you might more fitly be his mother than his wife.—Wherefore, if you shall establish this law, you will fill the whole earth with *Oedipuses*.

1st Old Wom.—O you all-abominable, you devised this argument through envy. But I'll be revenged on you. (Exit.)

Young Man.—By Jove the preserver, you have obliged me, my darling, by having removed the old woman from me. Wherefore, in return for these good deeds, I will return you a great kindness.

(Young woman takes him by the arm.)

2d Old Wom.—(Suddenly coming up.) Hollo you! whither are you dragging this man in violation of the law, when the written law orders him first to choose me?

Young Man.—Ah me, miserable! Whence did you pop out—the devil take you! For this pest is more abominable than that.

2d Old Wom.—(Trying to drag him away.) Come this way!

Young Man.—(To the young woman.) By no means suffer me to be dragged away by this old woman, I beseech you!

2d Old Wom.—Nay, I do not drag you, but the law drags you. (Exit young woman.)

Young Man.—It does not drag me, but an *Empusa* clothed in a bloody blister.

2d Old Wom.—Follow this way, quickly, my darling, and don't chatter!

Young Man.—Come then, permit me first to go to the necessary to recover my spirits, otherwise you'll see me presently soiling this spot through fear.

2d Old Wom.—Be of good courage! come! you shall ease yourself in the house.

Young Man.—I fear lest I do even more than I wish. But I will put in two sufficient sureties.

2d Old Wom.—Put me in no sureties!

3d Old Wom.—(Running up.) Whither, whither are you going with her?

Young Man.—I am not going, but am dragged. But many blessings on you, whoever you are, because you did not suffer

me to be destroyed. (Catches sight of her for the first time.)
O Hercules! O ye Pans! O ye Corybantes! O ye Dioscuri! this
pest, again, is much more abominable than the other. But
what in the world is this thing, I beseech you? Are you an
ape covered over with white lead, or an old woman sent up
from the dead?

3d Old Wom.—Do not jeer me, but follow this way.

2d Old Wom.—Nay, rather, this way.

3d Old Wom.—Be assured that I will never let you go.

2d Old Wom.—Neither, indeed, will I.

Young Man.—You will tear me in pieces, the devil take
you!

2d Old Wom.—For you ought to follow me in conformity
with the law.

3d Old Wom.—Not if another old woman still uglier appear.

Young Man.—Come, if I first perish miserably through you,
how shall I come to that beautiful one?

3d Old Wom.—Do you look to that yourself: but this you
must do.

Young Man.—Then by choosing which of you first shall I
be set free?

2d Old Wom.—Don't you know? you must come this way.

Young Man.—Then let this one let me go.

3d Old Wom.—Nay, rather come this way to my house.

Young Man.—Yes, if she will let me go.

2d Old Wom.—But, by Jove, I will not let you go.

3d Old Wom.—Neither, indeed, will I.

Young Man.—You would be dangerous, if you were ferry-
men.

2d Old Wom.—Why so?

Young Man.—You would wear out those on board by drag-
ging them.

2d Old Wom.—Follow this way in silence!

3d Old Wom.—No, by Jove, but to my house.

Young Man.—This affair is plainly according to the decree of Cannonus; I must choose you divided into two. How then shall I be able to row double-handed?

2d Old Wom.—Very well, when you shall have eaten a pot of onions.

Young Man.—Ah me, miserable! I am now dragged close to the door. (The second old woman here attempts to drag him into her house and exclude the third old woman.)

3d Old Wom.—(To the second old woman.) But it shall be no advantage to you; for I will rush in along with you.

Young Man.—Nay, do not, by the gods! for it is better to be afflicted with one than two evils.

3d Old Wom.—Yea, by Hecate, whether you wish it or no.

Young Man.—(To the audience.) O thrice-unlucky, if I must choose an ugly old woman; and then, again, as soon as I am freed from her, choose a Phryne, who has a flask on her jaws. Am I not wretched? Nay, rather, by Jove the Preserver, a most wretched man, and unfortunate, who must swim with such wild beasts. But nevertheless, if I suffer aught from these strumpets, let them bury me; and the surviving one, having covered alive with pitch, and then having armed her two feet with lead all around about the ankles, let them place above, on the top of the mound, as a substitute for a funeral vase.
(Exit with the two old women.)

Maid-servant.—(Entering from the banquet.) O happy people, and happy me, and my mistress herself most happy, and you, as many as stand at the doors, and all our neighbors, and our tribesmen, and I the servant in addition to these, who have my head anointed with excellent unguents, O Jove! But the Thasian jars, again, far surpass all these; for they abide in the head a long time; whereas all the rest lose their bloom and fly off. Wherefore they are far the best—far, certainly, ye gods! Fill out pure wine: it will cheer the women the whole night, who select whatever has the most fragrance. Come, O ye women, point out to me my master, the husband of my mistress, where he is.

Chorus.—We think you will find him if you remain here.

Maid-ser.—Most certainly; for see! here he comes to the dinner! (Enter master.) O master, O happy, O thrice fortunate!

Master.—I?

Maid-ser.—Yes you, by Jove, as never man was! For who could be happier than you, who alone of the citizens, being more than thirty thousand in number, have not dined?

Chorus.—You have certainly mentioned a happy man.

Maid-ser.—Whither, whither are you going?

Mast.—I am going to the dinner.

Maid-ser.—By Venus, you are far the latest of all! Nevertheless, your wife bade me take you with me and bring you, and these young women along with you. Some Chian wine is left, and the rest of the good things. Wherefore do not loiter! And whoever of the spectators is favorable to us, and whoever of the judges is not inclined to the other side, let him come with us; for we will provide all things. Will you not, then, kindly tell all, and omit nobody, but freely invite old man, youth and boy? for dinner is provided for them every one—if they go away home. (Exeunt Master and Maid-servant.)

Cho.—I will now hasten to the dinner. And see! I also have this torch opportunely! Why then do you keep loitering, and don't take these and lead them away? And while you are descending I will sing you a song for the beginning of dinner. (To the spectators.) I wish to make a slight suggestion to the judges: to the clever, to prefer me, remembering my clever parts; to those who laugh merrily, to prefer me on account of my jokes. Therefore of course I bid almost all to prefer me; and that my lot should not be any cause of detriment to me, because I obtained it first; but they ought to remember all these things and not violate their oaths, but always judge the choruses justly; and not to resemble in their manners the vile strumpets, who remember only whoever happen to be the last comers.

1st Semichorus.—Oh! oh! 'tis time now, O dear women, to retire to the dinner, if we are to finish the business. Therefore do you also move your feet in the Cretan fashion.

2d Semichorus.—I am doing so.

1st Semichorus.—And these hollow flanks now with your legs to the rhythm! for presently there will come an oyster-saltfish-skate-shark-reminder-of-heads-dressed-with-vinegar-lasertitium-leek-mixed-with-honey-thrush-blackbird-pigeon-dove-roasted-cock's-brains-wagtail-cushat-hare-stewed-in-new-wine-and-seasoned-with-green-corn-with-its-shoulders-fricassee.¹ So do you, having heard this, quickly and speedily take a bowl. And then make haste and take pea-soup, that you may feast upon it.

2d Semichorus.—But perhaps they are greedy.

Cho.—Raise yourselves aloft! lo! evæ! We will dine, evæ! evæ! evæ! for the victory: evæ! evæ! evæ! evæ!

¹ In the original Greek the above monstrous word consists of seventy-seven syllables, thus far outdoing Shakespeare's *honorificabilitudinitatibus* (*Love's Labor Lost*, Act V, Scene I), or even Rabelais' "*Antiperfouantado anapardexedamphicibrationes*."

AMPHITRYON;
OR
JUPITER IN DISGUISE.

BY
PLAUTUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JUPITER, who personates Amphitryon.

MERCURY, who personates Sosia.

AMPHITRYON, the Theban General.

SOSIA, the Servant of Amphitryon.

BLEPHARO, the Pilot of Amphitryon's ship.

AN ACTOR.

ALCMENA, Wife of Amphitryon.

BROMIA, } Attendants of Alcmena.
THESSALA, }

*SCENE—THEBES, BEFORE THE HOUSE
OF AMPHITRYON.*

PRELUDE

Amphitryon is the only Plautine play with a mythological plot. The author in his prologue calls it a tragi-comedy, not that it contains anything that we should term tragic, but because the introduction of divine with human personages gives it some of the characteristics of classic tragedy. That fastidious critic, Cicero, places its wit on a par with the Attic comedy, and Saint Jerome was accustomed to console himself, after nights spent in tears and lamentations because of his past sins, with reading this and other Plautine plays.

We know that it was Plautus' custom to take both the plots and the characters of his plays from Greek originals, but both were treated with great freedom, were thoroughly Latinized, as is shown by the fluent, witty dialogue characterized by racy expressions, evidently taken fresh from the lips of the people. The exact source of the *Amphitryon* is unknown, but it has been imitated by Molière, as well as by Dryden in his *Two Sosas*, and it probably furnished the original of the two Dromios in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*. The late Professor Palmer, of Trinity College, Dublin, unquestionably one of the greatest Plautine authorities in modern times, pronounces the *Amphitryon* "the most original of all the plays of Plautus. A Roman tone pervades it. In reading the account given by Sosia of the campaign against the Teleboæ, we feel as if Plautus

had versified a page of some old Latin annalist. The ultimatum of *Amphitryon*, with its demand for restitution, and threat in case of refusal; the pitched battle and crushing defeat of the enemy; the slaying of the commander-in-chief of the enemy by Amphitryon with his own hand, these particulars are all in proper Livian style. Then Alcmena herself is a true Roman wife, fulfilling the Roman conception of an equal consort with great dignity and perfection. The admirable delicacy with which a dangerous subject is treated alone shows a master's hand. It is sufficient to contrast it with Molière's *Amphitryon*, to show the immeasurable superiority of Plautus; it would be an insult to Plautus to compare it with Dryden's. Whatever Molière has added to Plautus has been a detriment; wherever he has departed from the treatment of Plautus he has lowered his conception. Neither Molière nor Dryden for one instant arrived at the conception of the loving husband and faithful wife which Plautus places before us."

With joy Amphitryon greets his wished-for spouse,
Whom he accounts the best of all in Thebes,
Whom all our Thebans so extol for virtue!

These are the becoming words (in Thornton's translation which we quote by way of variety) in which the returning warrior salutes his wife. And we have a fine conception of a woman's duties put into the mouth of Alcmena:

I hold that not my dowry, which is called so,
But honor, modesty, subdued desires,
Fear of the gods, affection for my parents,

And friendship with my kindred—that to you
I am obedient, bounteous to the good,
And ever ready to assist the virtuous.

Professor Palmer, in one of his latest critical works, pronounced this comedy “the most simple, dignified and tender of all the plays of Plautus.”

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mercury.

As, in purchasing and selling your merchandise, you are desirous to render me propitious to your bargains, and that I should assist you in all things; and as both in foreign countries and at home, you desire me to turn to the best advantage the business and the accounts of you all, and that with fair and ample profit, without end, I should crown the ventures both which you have begun, and which you shall begin; and as you wish me to delight you and all yours with joyous news—these tidings will I bring, that I may announce them to you, things which in especial are for your common interest (for already do you know, indeed, that it has been given and assigned to me by the other Divinities, to preside over news and profit): as you would wish me to favor and promote these things, that lasting gain may ever be forthcoming for you, so shall you give silence for this play, and so shall you be fair and upright judges here, all of you. Now, by whose command, and for what reason I am come, I'll tell you, and at the same time, myself, I will disclose my name. By the command of Jupiter I am come; my name is Mercury. My father has sent me hither to you to entreat, although, what should as his commands be enjoined on you, he knew that you would do, inasmuch as he knew full well that you venerate and fear himself, as is befitting Jupiter. But, certainly, he bade me ask this of you with entreaty, in gentle tones, and in bland accents. For, in fact, this Jupiter, by whose command I am come, dreads a mishap not less than any one of you. Born of a mortal mother, a mortal sire, it is not reasonable to be surprised if he has apprehensions for himself. And I too, as well, who am the son of Jupiter, through my relationship to

my father, stand in dread of ill. Therefore, in peace am I come to you, and peace do I bring. I wish a thing to be asked of you that's reasonable and feasible; for, reasonable things to ask of the reasonable, a reasonable mediator have I been sent. For from the reasonable it is not right to ask things unreasonable; whereas from the unreasonable to ask things reasonable, is sheer folly, since these unrighteous persons are ignorant of what is right, and observe it not. Now then, all lend your attention here to the things which I shall say. What we wish, you ought to wish as well: both I and my father have well deserved of you and of your state. But why should I mention how in Tragedies I have seen others, such as Neptune, Valor, Victory, Mars, Bellona, making mention of the good services which they had done you? Of all these benefits, the ruler of the Deities, my sire, was the founder. But this has never been the habit of my father, to throw in your teeth what good he has done unto the good. He thinks that this is gratefully returned by you to him, and that he bestows these blessings on you deservedly, which he does bestow. Now, the matter which I came here to ask, I'll first premise, after that I'll tell the subject of this Tragedy. Why have you contracted your brows? Is it because I said that this would be a Tragedy? I am a God, and I'll change it. This same, if you wish it, from a Tragedy I'll make to be a Comedy, with all the lines the same. Whether would ye it were so, or not? But I'm too foolish; as though I didn't know, who am a God, that you so wish it; upon this subject I understand what your feelings are. I'll make this to be a mixture—a Tragi-comedy. For me to make it entirely to be a Comedy, where Kings and Gods appear, I do not deem right. What then? Since here the servant has a part as well, just as I said, I'll make it to be a Tragi-comedy. Now Jupiter has ordered me to beg this of you, that the inspectors should go among each of the seats throughout the whole theatre, amid the spectators, that, if they should see any suborned applauders of any actor, there should in the theatre be taken away from them the pledge of their coats, as a security for their good behavior. But if any should solicit the palm of victory for the actors, or if for any artist, whether by written letters, or whether any person himself should

solicit personally, or whether by messenger; or if the *Ædiles*, too, should unfairly adjudge to any one the reward; Jupiter has commanded the law to be the same as if he had sought by solicitation an appointment for himself or for another. By valor has he declared that you exist as victors, not by canvassing or unfair dealing. Why any the less should there be the same principle for the player, which there is for the greatest man? By merit, not by favorers, ought we to seek our ends. He who does aright has ever favorers enough, if there is honesty in them in whose disposal this matter rests. This, too, he directed me likewise in his injunctions, that there should be inspectors over the players; that he who should have procured suborned persons to applaud himself, or he who should have contrived for another to give less satisfaction, from the same they might strip off his dress and leather mask. I don't wish you to be surprised, for what reason Jupiter now concerns himself about actors. Don't be surprised, Jupiter himself is about to take part in this play. Why are you wondering at this? As though, indeed, a new thing were now mentioned, that Jupiter takes to the calling of a player. But a year since, when here on the stage the actors invoked Jupiter, he came; he aided them. Besides, surely in Tragedy he has a place. This play, I say, Jupiter himself will take a part in this day, and I together with him. Now do you give attention while I shall relate to you the subject of this Comedy.

This city is Thebes; in that house there (pointing), *Amphitryon* dwells, born at Argos, of an Argive sire; whose wife is *Alcmena*, daughter of *Electryon*. This *Amphitryon* is now the general of the Theban troops; for between the *Teleboans* and the Theban people there is war. He, before he departed hence for the expedition, left his wife *Alcmena* pregnant. My father, unknown to her husband, began to love *Alcmena*, and took temporary possession of her person for himself. Now, that more fully you may understand the matter with respect to *Alcmena*, she is pregnant both by her husband and by supreme Jupiter. And my father is now in-doors with her; but he has so disguised himself, as though he were *Amphitryon*. Now, that you may not be surprised at this dress of mine, inasmuch as I have come out here this way in servile

garb, an ancient and an antique circumstance, made new, will I relate to you, by reason of which I have come to you attired in this new fashion. I have taken on myself the form of the servant Sosia, who has gone hence together with Amphitryon on the expedition, that I may be able to serve my father in his amour, and that the servants may not be inquiring who I am, when they see me here frequenting oft the house. Now, as they will suppose me a servant and their fellow-servant, not any one will inquire who I am, or why I'm come. What has been done there at the army, my father is now relating to Alcmena. She really thinks that he is her own husband. There, my father is now relating how he has routed the legions of the enemy; how he has been enriched with abundant gifts. Those gifts which there were given to Amphitryon, we have carried off; what he pleases, my father easily performs. Now will Amphitryon come hither this day from the army, his servant too, whose form I am bearing. Now, that you may be able the more easily to distinguish between us, I always shall carry these little wings here (pointing) upon my broad-brimmed cap; then besides, for my father there will be a golden tuft beneath his cap; that mark will not be upon Amphitryon. These marks no one of these domestics will be able to see; but you will see them. But yonder is Sosia, the servant of Amphitryon; he is now coming yonder from the harbor, with a lantern. I will now drive him, as he arrives, away from the house. Attend, it will be worth the while of you spectators, for Jupiter and Mercury to perform here the actors' part.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Sosia, with a Lantern.

Sosia.—(To himself.) What other person is there more bold than I, or who more stout of heart, who know the humors of young men, and who am walking at this hour of night alone? What shall I do, if now the officers of the watch should thrust me into prison. To-morrow shall I be dealt out from there, just as though from a store-closet, for a whipping; nor will it be allowed me to plead my cause, nor will there be

a bit of aid from my master; nor will there be a person but that they will imagine, all of them, that I am deserving. And so will eight sturdy fellows be thumping on wretched me just like an anvil; in this way, just come from foreign parts, I shall be received with hospitality by the public. The inconsiderateness of my master compels me to this, who has packed me off from the harbor at this time of night whether I would or no. Couldn't he as well have sent me here by daylight? For this reason is servitude to a man of high station a greater hardship; for this reason is the servant of a wealthy man the more wretched: both night and day, without ceasing, there is enough, and more than enough of work for him; for doing or for saying occasion is ever arising, so that you can't be at rest. The master, abounding in servants, and free from labor himself, thinks that whatever he happens to choose, can be done; he thinks that just, and reckons not what the labor is; nor will he ever consider whether he commands a thing that's reasonable or unreasonable. Wherefore, in servitude many hardships do befall us; in pain this burden must be borne and endured.

Mercury.—(To the audience.) 'Twere with better reason for me to complain of servitude after this fashion; I, who to-day was free, and whom my father is now employing as a slave: this fellow is complaining, who was born a slave.

Sos.—(To himself.) Really I am a rascal beyond a doubt; for only 'his moment it has suggested itself to me, that on my arrival I should give thanks, and address the Gods for their kindnesses vouchsafed. For surely, by my troth, if they were only desirous to give me a return according to my deserts, they would commission some person on my arrival soundly to box my ears, since those kindnesses which they have done me I have held as worthless and of no value.

Merc.—(Apart.) He does what people are not generally in the habit of doing, in knowing what his deserts are.

Sos.—(To himself.) What I never expected, nor any one else of my townsmen, to befall him, that same has come to pass, for us to come home safe and sound. Victorious, the enemy conquered, the troops are returning home, this very mighty war brought to an end, and the enemy slain. A city

that has caused many a bitter death for the Theban people, that same has been conquered by the strength and valor of our soldiers, and taken by storm, under the command and conduct of my master Amphitryon in especial. With booty, territory, and glory, too, has he loaded his fellow-citizens, and for Creon, King of Thebes, has he firmly fixed his sway. From the harbor he has sent me before him to his house that I may bear these tidings to his wife, how he has promoted the public good by his guidance, conduct, and command. This now will I consider, in what manner I shall address her, when I've arrived there. If I tell a falsehood, I shall be doing as I am accustomed after my usual wont; for when they were fighting with all their might, then with all my might I ran away. But still I shall pretend as though I was present, and I'll tell her what I heard. But in what manner and with what expressions it is right for me to tell my story, I still wish first to consider here with myself. (He assumes an attitude of thought.) In these terms will I give this narrative. "In the first place, when we arrived there, when first we made land, Amphitryon immediately made choice of the powerful men among the chieftains. Those he despatched on the embassy, and bade them tell his mind to the Teleboans; that if without constraint and without warfare they should be ready to deliver up what was plundered and the plunderers, and if they should be ready to restore what they had carried off, he would immediately conduct the army homewards, that the Greeks would depart from their territory, and that he would grant peace and quietness to them: but if they should be otherwise disposed, and not concede the things which he demanded, he, in consequence, would attack their city with extreme violence and with his men. When the ambassadors had repeated these things, which Amphitryon had enjoined, in order to the Teleboans, being men stout of heart, relying on their valor, and confident in their prowess, they rebuked our ambassadors very rudely. They answered that they were able in warfare to protect themselves and theirs, and that at once they must lead the army with all haste out of their territories. When the ambassadors brought back this message, straightway Amphitryon drew out all his army from the encampment; on the

other side, the Teleboans led forth their legions from the town, furnished with most gorgeous arms. After they had gone forth on either side in full array, the soldiers were marshalled, the ranks were formed. We, after our manner and usage, drew up our legions; the enemy, too, drew up their legions facing us. Then either general went forth into the mid-space beyond the throng of the ranks, and they parleyed together. It was agreed between them, that, whichever side should be conquered in that battle, they should surrender up their city, lands, altars, hearths, and themselves. After that was done, the trumpets on either side gave the signal; the earth reëchoed, they raised a shout on either side. Each general, both upon this side and on that, offered vows to Jupiter, and then encouraged his troops. Each man according to his ability does that which each one can and has the strength to do; he smites with his falchion; the weapons crash; the welkin bellows with the uproar of the men; of breaths and pantings a cloud is formed; men fall by wounds inflicted by men. At length, as we desired, our troops conquered; the foe fell in numbers; ours, on the other hand, pressed on; firm in our strength, we were victorious. But still not one betook himself to flight, nor yet gave way at his post, but standing there he waged the combat. Sooner than quit the spot, they parted with their lives; each, as he stood, lay there and kept his rank in death. When my master Amphitryon saw this, at once he ordered the cavalry on the right to charge. The cavalry obeyed directly; from the right wing, with a tremendous shout, with brisk onset they rushed on; and rightfully did they slaughter and trample down the impious forces of the foe."

Merc.—(Apart.) Not even one word of these has he yet uttered correctly; for I was there in the battle personally, and my father, too, when it was fought.

Sos.—(Continuing.) "The enemy betook themselves to flight. Then was new spirit added to our men, the Teleboans flying, with darts were their bodies filled, and Amphitryon himself, with his own hand, struck off the head of Pterelas their king. This battle was being fought there even from the morning till the evening. This do I the better remem-

ber for this reason; because on that day I went without my breakfast. But night at last, by its interposing, cut short this combat. The next day, the chiefs came weeping from the city to us at the camp. With covered hands, they entreated us to pardon their offenses; and they all surrendered up themselves, and all things divine and human, their city and their children, into the possession and unto the disposal of the Theban people. Lastly, by reason of his valor, a golden goblet was presented to my master Amphitryon, from which King Pterelas had been used to drink." These things I'll thus tell my mistress. I'll now proceed to obey my master's order and to betake me home. (He moves.)

Merc.—(Apart.) Heyday! he's about to come this way; I'll go meet him; and I'll not permit this fellow at any time to-day to approach this house. Since I have his form upon myself, I'm resolved to play the fellow off. And indeed, since I have taken upon me his figure and his station, it is right for me likewise to have actions and manners like to his. Therefore it befits me to be artful, crafty, very cunning, and by his own weapon, artfulness, to drive him from the door. But what means this? He is looking up at the sky. I'll watch what scheme he's about.

Sos.—(Looking up at the sky.) Upon my faith, for sure, if there is aught besides that I believe, or know for certain, I do believe that this night the God of Night has gone to sleep drunk; for neither does the Wain move itself in any direction in the sky, nor does the Moon bestir herself anywhere from where she first arose; nor does Orion, or the Evening Star, or the Pleiades, set. In such a fashion are the stars standing stock-still, and the night is yielding not a jot to the day.

Merc.—(Apart.) Go on, Night, as you've begun, and pay obedience to my father. In best style, the best of services are you performing for the best of beings; in giving this, you reap a fair return.

Sos.—(To himself.) I do not think that I have ever seen a longer night than this, except one of like fashion, which live-long night I was hanging up, having been first whipped. Even that as well, by my troth, does this one by far exceed

in its length. I' faith, I really do believe that the Sun's asleep, and is thoroughly drenched. It's a wonder to me if he hasn't indulged himself a little too much at dinner.

Merc.—(Apart.) Do you really say so, you scoundrel? Do you think that the Gods are like yourself? I' faith, you hang-dog, I'll entertain you for these speeches and misdeeds of yours; only come this way, will you, and you'll find your ruin.

Sos.—(To himself.) Where are those wenchers, who unwillingly lie a-bed alone? A rare night this for making the best of what was a bad bargain at first.

Merc.—(Apart.) My father then, according to this fellow's words, is doing rightly and wisely, who is in the house with Alcmena.

Sos.—(To himself.) I'll go tell Alcmena, as my master ordered me. (Advancing, he discovers Mercury.) But who is this fellow that I see before the house at this time of night? I don't like it.

Merc.—(Aside.) There is not in existence another such cowardly fellow as this.

Sos.—(Aside.) Now, when I think of it, this fellow wishes to take my mantle off once more.

Merc.—(Aside.) The fellow's afraid; I'll have some sport with him.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm quite undone, my teeth are chattering. For sure, on my arrival, he is about to receive me with the hospitality of his fist. He's a merciful person, I suppose; now, because my master has obliged me to keep awake, with his fists just now he'll be making me go to sleep. I'm most confoundedly undone. Troth now, prithee, look, how big and how strong he is.

Merc.—(Aside.) I'll talk at him aloud, he shall hear what I say. Therefore indeed, in a still greater degree, shall he conceive fears within himself. (In a loud voice, holding up his fists.) Come, fists, it's a long time now since you found provision for my stomach; it seems to have taken place quite a long time ago, when yesterday you laid four men asleep, stript naked.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm dreadfully afraid lest I should be changing my name here, and become a Quintus instead of a

Sosia. He declares that he has laid four men asleep; I fear lest I should be adding to that number.

Merc.—(Throwing about his arms.) Well, now then for it. This is the way I intend.

Sos.—(Aside.) He is girded tight; for sure, he's getting himself ready.

Merc.—He shan't get off without getting a thrashing.

Sos.—(Aside.) What person, I wonder?

Merc.—Beyond a doubt, whatever person comes this way, he shall eat my fists.

Sos.—(Aside.) Get out with you, I don't wish to eat at this time of night; I've lately dined. Therefore do you, if you are wise, bestow your dinner on those who are hungry.

Merc.—The weight of this fist is no poor one.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm done for; he is poisoning his fists.

Merc.—What if I were to touch him, stroking him down, so that he may go to sleep?

Sos.—(Aside.) You would be proving my salvation; for I've been watching most confoundedly these three nights running.

Merc.—My hand refuses to learn to strike his cheek; it cannot do a disgraceful action. Hand of mine, of a changed form must he become whom you smite with this fist.

Sos.—(Aside.) This fellow will be furbishing me up, and be moulding my face anew.

Merc.—(To his fist.) The man that you hit full, his face must surely be boned.

Sos.—(Aside.) It's a wonder if this fellow isn't thinking of boning me just like a lamprey. Away with a fellow that bones people! If he sees me, I'm a dead man.

Merc.—Some fellow is stinking to his destruction.

Sos.—(Aside.) Woe to me! Is it I that stink?

Merc.—And he cannot be very far off; but he has been a long way off from here.

Sos.—(Aside.) This person's a wizard.

Merc.—My fists are longing.

Sos.—(Aside.) If you are going to exercise them upon me, I beg that you'll first cool them down against the wall.

Merc.—A voice has come flying to my ears.

Sos.—(Aside.) Unlucky fellow, for sure, was I, who didn't clip its wings. I've got a voice with wings, it seems.

Merc.—This fellow is demanding of me for himself a heavy punishment for his beast's back.

Sos.—(Aside.) As for me, I've got no beast's back.

Merc.—He must be well loaded with my fists.

Sos.—(Aside.) I' faith, I'm fatigued, coming from board ship, when I was brought hither; even now I'm sea-sick. Without a burden, I can hardly creep along, so don't think that with a load I can go.

Merc.—Why, surely, somebody is speaking here.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm all right, he doesn't see me; he thinks it's "Somebody" speaking: Sosia is certainly my name.

Merc.—But here, from the right-hand side, the voice, as it seems, strikes upon my ear.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm afraid that I shall be getting a thrashing here this day, in place of my voice, that's striking him.

(Moves.)

Merc.—Here he is—he's coming toward me, most opportunely.

Sos.—(Aside.) I'm terrified—I'm numbed all over. Upon my faith, I don't know where in the world I now am, if any one should ask me; and to my misfortune, I cannot move myself for fright. It's all up with me; the orders of his master and Sosia are lost together. But I'm determined boldly to address this fellow to his face, so that I may be able to appear valiant to him; that he may keep his hands off me.
(Advances toward the door.)

Merc.—(Accosting him.) Where are you going, you that are carrying Vulcan enclosed in your horn?

Sos.—Why do you make that inquiry, you who are boning men's heads with your fists?

Merc.—Are you slave or free man?

Sos.—Just as it suits my inclination.

Merc.—Do you really say so?

Sos.—I really do say so.

Merc.—Whip-scoundrel!

Sos.—Now you are telling a lie.

Merc.—But I'll soon make you own that I'm telling the truth.

Sos.—What necessity is there for it?

Merc.—Can I know whence you have set out, whose you are, or why you are come?

Sos.—(Pointing.) This way I'm going, and I'm the servant of my master. Are you any the wiser now?

Merc.—I'll this day make you be holding that foul tongue of yours.

Sos.—You can't; it is kept pure and becomingly.

Merc.—Do you persist in chattering? What business now have you at this house? (Points to the house.)

Sos.—Aye, and what business have you?

Merc.—King Creon always sets a watch every night.

Sos.—He does right; because we were abroad, he has been protecting our house. But however, do go in now, and say that some of the family servants have arrived.

Merc.—How far you are one of the family servants I don't know. But unless you are off from here this instant, family servant as you are, I'll make you to be received in no familiar style.

Sos.—Here, I say, I live, and of these people I am the servant.

Merc.—But do you understand how it is? Unless you are off, I'll make you to be exalted this day.

Sos.—In what way, pray?

Merc.—You shall be carried off, you shan't walk away, if I take up a stick.

Sos.—But I declare that I am one of the domestics of this family.

Merc.—Consider, will you, how soon you want a drubbing, unless you are off from here this instant.

Sos.—Do you want, as I arrive from foreign parts, to drive me from my home?

Merc.—Is this your home?

Sos.—It is so, I say.

Merc.—Who is your master, then?

Sos.—Amphitryon, who is now the general of the Theban forces, to whom Alcmena is married.

Merc.—How say you? What's your name?

Sos.—The Thebans call me Sosia, the son of my father Davus.

Merc.—Assuredly, at your peril have you come here this day, with your trumped-up lies, your patched-up knaveries, you essence of effrontery.

Sos.—Why no, it's rather with garments patched-up that I'm arrived here, not with knaveries.

Merc.—Why, you are lying again; you come with your feet, surely, and not with your garments.

Sos.—Yes, certainly.

Merc.—Then certainly take that for your lie.

(He strikes him.)

Sos.—By my troth, I certainly don't wish for it, of course.

Merc.—But by my faith, you certainly shall have it, of course, whether you wish or not: for, in fact, this is certainly my determination, and it is not at your own option.

(He strikes him.)

Sos.—Mercy, I entreat of you.

Merc.—Do you dare to say that you are Sosia, when I myself am he?

(Strikes him.)

Sos.—(Crying at the top of his voice.) I'm being murdered.

Merc.—Why, you are crying out for a trifle as yet, compared with what it will be. Whose are you now?

Sos.—Your own; for with your fists you have laid hands on me. Help, help, citizens of Thebes.

(Mercury striking him.)

Merc.—What, still bawling, you scoundrel? Speak—what have you come for?

Sos.—For there to be somebody for you to belabor with your fists.

Merc.—Whose are you?

Sos.—Amphitryon's Sosia, I tell you.

Merc.—For this reason then you shall be beaten the more, because you prate thus idly; I am Sosia, not you.

Sos.—(Aside.) I wish the Gods would have it so, that you were he in preference, and that I were thrashing you.

Merc.—What, muttering still? (Strikes him.)

Sos.—I'll hold my tongue then.

Merc.—Who is your master?

Sos.—Whoever you like.

Merc.—How then? What's your name now?

Sos.—Nothing but what you shall command.

Merc.—You said that you were Amphitryon's Sosia.

Sos.—I made a mistake; but this I meant to say, that I was Amphitryon's associate.

Merc.—Why, I was sure that we had no servant called Sosia except myself. Your senses are forsaking you.

Sos.—I wish that those fists of yours had done so.

Merc.—I am that Sosia, whom you were just now telling me that you are.

Sos.—I pray that I may be allowed to discourse with you in quietness, so as not to be beaten.

Merc.—Well then, let there be a truce for a short time, if you want to say anything.

Sos.—I'll not speak unless peace is concluded, since you are the stronger with your fists.

Merc.—If you wish to say anything, speak; I'll not hurt you.

Sos.—Am I to trust in your word?

Merc.—Yes, in my word.

Sos.—What, if you deceive me?

Merc.—Why, then may Mercury be angry with Sosia.

Sos.—Then give attention: now I'm at liberty to say in freedom anything I please. I am Sosia, servant of Amphitryon.

Merc.—What, again? (Offering to strike him.)

Sos.—I have concluded the peace, ratified the treaty—I speak the truth.

Merc.—Take that, then. (He strikes him.)

Sos.—As you please, and what you please, pray do, since you are the stronger with your fists. But whatever you shall do, still, upon my faith, I really shall not be silent about that.

Merc.—So long as you live, you shall never make me to be any other than Sosia at this moment.

Sos.—I' faith, you certainly shall never make me to be any other person than my own self; and besides myself we have no other servant of the name of Sosia—myself, who went hence on the expedition together with Amphitryon.

Merc.—This fellow is not in his senses.

Sos.—The malady that you impute to me, you have that same yourself. How, the plague, am I not Sosia, the servant of Amphitryon? Has not our ship, which brought me, arrived here this night from the Persian port? Has not my master sent me here? Am I not now standing before our house? Have I not a lantern in my hand? Am I not talking? Am I not wide awake? Has not this fellow been thumping me with his fists? By my troth, he has been doing so; for even now, to my pain, my cheeks are tingling. Why, then, do I hesitate? Or why don't I go in-doors into our house? (He makes toward the door.)

Merc.—(Stepping between.) How—your house?

Sos.—Indeed it really is so.

Merc.—Why, all that you have been saying just now, you have trumped up; I surely am Amphitryon's Sosia. For in the night this ship of ours weighed anchor from the Persian port, and where King Pterelas reigned, the city we took by storm, and the legions of the Teleboans in fighting we took by arms, and Amphitryon himself cut off the head of King Pterelas in battle.

Sos.—(Aside.) I do not trust my own self, when I hear him affirm these things; certainly, he really does relate exactly the things that were done there. (Aloud.) But how say you? What spoil from the Teleboans was made a present to Amphitryon?

Merc.—A golden goblet, from which King Pterelas used to drink.

Sos.—(Aside.) He has said the truth. Where now is this goblet?

Merc.—'Tis in a casket, sealed with the seal of Amphitryon.

Sos.—Tell me, what is the seal?

Merc.—The Sun rising with his chariot. Why are you on the catch for me, you villain?

Sos.—(Aside.) He has overpowered me with his proofs. I must look out for another name. I don't know from whence he witnessed these things. I'll now entrap him finely; for what I did alone by myself, and when not another person was present in the tent, that, he certainly will never be able this day to tell me. (Aloud.) If you are Sosia, when the armies were fighting most vigorously, what were you doing in the tent? If you tell me that, I'm vanquished.

Merc.—There was a cask of wine; from it I filled an earthen pot.

Sos.—(Aside.) He has got upon the track.

Merc.—That I drew full of pure wine, just as it was born from the mother grape.

Sos.—(Aside.) It's a wonder if this fellow wasn't lying hid inside of that earthen pot. It is the fact, that there I did drink an earthen pot full of wine.

Merc.—Well—do I now convince you by my proofs that you are not Sosia?

Sos.—Do you deny that I am?

Merc.—Why should I not deny it, who am he myself?

Sos.—By Jupiter I swear that I am he, and that I do not say false.

Merc.—But by Mercury, I swear that Jupiter does not believe you; for I am sure that he will rather credit me without an oath than you with an oath.

Sos.—Who am I, at all events, if I am not Sosia? I ask you that.

Merc.—When I choose not to be Sosia, then do you be Sosia; now, since I am he, you'll get a thrashing, if you are not off hence, you fellow without a name.

Sos.—(Aside.) Upon my faith, for sure, when I examine him and recollect my own figure, just in such manner as I am (I've often looked in a glass), he is exactly like me. He has the broad-brimmed hat and clothing just the same; he is as like me as I am myself. His leg, foot, stature, shorn head, eyes, nose, even his lips, cheeks, chin, beard, neck—the whole of him. What need is there of words? If his back is marked with scars, than this likeness there is nothing more like. But when I reflect, really, I surely am the same person that I always was. My master I know, I know our house; I am quite in my wits and senses. I'm not going to obey this fellow in what he says; I'll knock at the door.

(Goes toward the door.)

Merc.—Whither are you betaking yourself?

Sos.—Home.

Merc.—If now you were to ascend the chariot of Jove and fly away from here, then you could hardly be able to escape destruction.

Sos.—Mayn't I be allowed to deliver the message to my mistress that my master ordered me to give?

Merc.—If you want to deliver any message to your own mistress; this mistress of mine I shall not allow you to approach. But if you provoke me, you'll be just now taking hence your loins broken.

Sos.—In preference, I'll be off. (Aside.) Immortal Gods, I do beseech your mercy. Where did I lose myself? Where have I been transformed? Where have I parted with my figure? Or have I left myself behind there, if perchance I have forgotten it? For really this person has possession of all my figure, such as it formerly was. While living, that is

done for me, which no one will ever do for me when dead. I'll go to the harbor, and I'll tell my master these things as they have happened—unless even he as well shall not know me, which may Jupiter grant, so that this day, bald, with shaven crown, I may assume the cap of freedom. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

Mercury, alone.

Merc.—Well and prosperously has this affair gone on for me; from the door have I removed the greatest obstacle, so that it may be allowed my father to embrace her in security. When now he shall have reached his master, Amphitryon there, he will say that the servant Sosia has repulsed himself from the door here; and then the other will suppose that he is telling him a lie, and will not believe that he has come here as he had ordered him. Both of them and the whole household of Amphitryon I will fill with mistakes and distraction, even until my father shall have had full enjoyment of her whom he loves; then at last all shall know what has been done. In the end Jupiter shall restore Alcmena to the former affection of her husband. For Amphitryon will just now be beginning a quarrel with his wife, and will be accusing her of incontinence; then will my father change for her this strife into tranquillity. Now, inasmuch as yet I've said but little about Alcmena, this day will she bring forth two sons, twins; the one will be born in the tenth month after he was begotten, the other in the seventh month; of these the one is the son of Amphitryon, the other of Jupiter. But of the younger son the father is the superior, of the elder the inferior. (To the audience.) Now do you comprehend this how it is? But for the sake of the honor of this Alcmena, my father will take care that it shall happen at one birth, so that in one travail she may complete her double pangs, and not be laid under suspicion of unchastity. Although, as I have said just now, Amphitryon shall still know all the matter in the end. What then? No one surely will impute it to Alcmena as a disgrace; for it does not seem that a God is acting justly to permit his own offenses and his own faulti-

ness to fall upon a mortal. I'll cut short my talk: the door makes a noise. See, the counterfeit Amphitryon is coming out of doors, and together with him Alcmena, the wife that he has taken the loan of.

SCENE III.

Enter Jupiter and Alcmena, from the house.

Jupiter.—Kindly fare you well, Alcmena; take care, as you are doing, of our common interest, and pray be sparing of yourself; you see that now your months are completed. It's necessary for me to go away from here; but the offspring that shall be born do you bring up.

Alcmena.—What business is this, my husband, since you thus suddenly leave your home?

Jup.—By my troth, 'tis not that I am wearied of you or of my home; but when the chief commander is not with the army, that is sooner done which ought not to be done than that which needs to be done.

Merc.—(Aside.) This is a very clever counterfeit, who really is my own father. (To the audience.) Do you observe him, how blandly he smoothes the lady over.

Alc.—I' faith, I find by experience how much you value your wife.

Jup.—If there is no one among women whom I love so much, are you satisfied?

Merc.—(Aside.) Verily, upon my faith, if Juno only knew that you were giving your attention to such matters, I'd warrant that you'd rather be Amphitryon than Jupiter.

Alc.—I would rather that I should find it so by experience, than that it should be told me. Only yesterday, in the middle of the night, you came, and now you are going away. Is this your pleasure?

Merc.—(Aside.) I'll approach, and address her. (He approaches Alcmena.) Never, upon my faith, do I believe that any mortal did so distractedly love his wife as he distractedly dotes upon you.

Jup.—Scoundrel!—don't I know you of old? Won't you be off out of my sight? What business have you in this matter, whip-knave? or why your muttering? Whom this very instant, with this walking-stick, I'll—

(Shakes his stick over his head.)

Alc.—Oh, don't.

Jup.—Only make a whisper.

Merc.—(Aside.) My first attempt at playing second fiddle had almost come to an unfortunate conclusion.

Jup.—But as to what you say, my wife, you ought not to be angry with me. I came away privately from the army: these moments I stole for you, that you the first might know from me the first, how I had managed the common interests. All this have I related to you. If I had not loved you very much, I should not have done so.

Merc.—(Aside.) Isn't he doing just as I said? In her alarm, he is smoothing her down.

Jup.—That the army then mayn't find it out, I must return there privately, lest they should say that I have preferred my wife before the common interests.

Alc.—By your departure you set your wife in tears.

Jup.—Be quiet; don't spoil your eyes: I'll return very shortly.

Alc.—That "very shortly" is a long time.

Jup.—I do not with pleasure leave you here, or go away from you.

Alc.—I am sensible of it; for, the night that you have come to me, on the same you go away.

(She embraces him.)

Jup.—Why do you hold me? It is time to go: I wish to depart from the city before it dawns. Now, Alcmena, this goblet which has been given me there on account of my valor, from which King Pterelas used to drink, he whom I slew with my own hand, the same I present to you.

(Presents to her the goblet.)

Alc.—(Taking the goblet.) You do as you are wont in other things. By heavens, it is a noble gift; like him who gave the gift.

Merc.—Aye, a noble gift; just like her to whom it has been given as a gift.

Jup.—What, still going on? Can't I, you scoundrel, make an end of you?

Alc.—Amphitryon, there's a dear, don't be angry with Sosia on my account.

Jup.—Just as you wish I'll do.

Merc.—(Aside.) From his intriguing, how very savage he does become!

Jup.—Do you wish for anything else?

Alc.—That when I am absent you will love me—me, who am yours, though absent.

Merc.—Let's go, Amphitryon; it's already dawning.

Jup.—Go you first, Sosia. (Exit Mercury.) I'll follow this instant. (To Alcmena.) Is there anything you wish?

Alc.—Yes; that you'll come back speedily.

Jup.—I will; and sooner than you expect will I be here; therefore be of good heart. (Alcmena goes into the house.)

SCENE IV.

Jupiter, alone.

Jup.—Now Night, thou who hast tarried for me, I permit thee to give place to Day, that thou mayst shine upon mortals with a bright and brilliant light. And Night, as much as on this last thou wast too long, so much the shorter will I make the Day to be, that a Day of equal disparity may succeed the Night. I'll go and follow Mercury. (Exit.)

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Amphitryon and Sosia, at the end of the stage.

Amphitryon.—Come, do you follow after me.

Sosia.—I'm following; I'm following close after you.

Amph.—I think that you are the veriest rogue—

Sos.—But for what reason?

Amph.—Because that which neither is, nor ever was, nor will be, you declare to me.

Sos.—Look at that; you are now acting according to your usual fashion, to be putting no trust in your servants.

Amph.—Why is it so? For what reason? Surely now, by the powers, I'll cut out that villainous tongue of yours, you villain.

Sos.—I am yours; do each thing just as it is agreeable and as it pleases you. Still you never can, by any method, hinder me from saying these things just as they took place here.

Amph.—You consummate villain, do you dare tell me this, that you are now at home, who are here present?

Sos.—I speak the truth.

Amph.—A mishap shall the Gods send upon you, and I this day will send it as well.

Sos.—That's in your power, for I am your property.

Amph.—Do you dare, you whip-scurdrel, to play your tricks with me, your master? Do you dare affirm that which no person ever yet before this has seen, and which cannot possibly happen, for the same man to be in two places together at the same time?

Sos.—Undoubtedly, such as I say is the fact.

Amph.—May Jupiter confound you!

Sos.—What evil, master, have I been deemed deserving of in your service?

Amph.—Do you ask me, you rogue, who are even making sport of me?

Sos.—With reason might you curse me, if it had not so happened. But I tell no lie, and I speak as the thing really did happen.

Amph.—This fellow's drunk, as I imagine.

Sos.—What, I?

Amph.—Yes—you there.

Sos.—I wish I were so.

Amph.—You are wishing for that which is fact; where have you been drinking?

Sos.—Nowhere, indeed.

Amph.—What is this, that is the matter with the fellow?

Sos.—Really I have told you ten times over. I am both at home now, I say (do you mark me?), and I, Sosia, am with you likewise. Don't I appear, master, to have told you quite distinctly, and quite circumstantially, that this is so.

Amph.—Avaunt, get away with you from me.

Sos.—What's the matter?

Amph.—A pestilence possesses you.

Sos.—But why do you say so to me? I really am quite well and in perfect health, Amphitryon.

Amph.—But I'll make you this very day, just as you have deserved, not to be quite so well, and to be miserable instead of your perfect health, if I return home. Follow me, you who in this fashion are making sport of your master with your crack-brained talk; you, who, since you have neglected to perform what your master ordered, are now come even of your own accord to laugh at your master. Things which neither can happen, and which no one ever yet heard of in talk, you are telling of, you villain; on your back I'll take care and make those lies to tell this very day.

Sos.—Amphitryon, this is the most wretched of wretchedness to a good servant, who is telling the truth to his master, if that same truth is overpowered by violence.

Amph.—Discuss it with me by proofs. Why, how the plague can such a thing happen, for you now to be both here and at home? That I want to be told.

Sos.—I really am both here and there; this any person has a right to wonder at; nor, Amphitryon, does this seem more strange to you than to myself.

Amph.—In what way?

Sos.—In no degree, I say, is this more strange to you than to myself; nor, so may the Deities love me, did I at first credit Sosia—me myself, until that Sosia, I myself, made me to believe me myself. In order did he relate everything, as each thing came to pass, when we sojourned with the enemy; and then besides, he has carried off my figure together with my name. Not even is milk more like to milk

than is that I myself like to me myself. For when some time since, before daybreak, you sent me from the harbor home before you——

Amph.—What then?

Sos.—I had been standing a long time at the door before I had got there.

Amph.—Plague on it, what nonsense! Are you quite in your senses?

Sos.—I'm just as you see me.

Amph.—Some mischief, I know not what, has befallen this fellow from an evil hand since he left me.

Sos.—I confess it; for I have been most shockingly bruised with his fists.

Amph.—Who has been beating you?

Sos.—I myself, who am now at home, beat me myself.

Amph.—Take you care to say nothing but what I shall ask you. Now, do you answer me. First of all, who this Sosia is, of that I want to be informed.

Sos.—He is your servant.

Amph.—Really I have even more than I desire by your own one self. Never, too, since I was born, had I a servant Sosia besides yourself.

Sos.—But now, Amphitryon, I say this; I'll make you, I say, on your arrival, meet with another Sosia at home, a servant of yours, besides myself, a son of Davus, the same father with myself, of figure and age as well just like myself. What need is there of words? This Sosia of yours is become two-fold.

Amph.—You talk of things extremely wonderful. But did you see my wife?

Sos.—Nay, but it was never allowed me to go in-doors into the house.

Amph.—Who hindered you?

Sos.—This Sosia, whom I was just now telling of, he who thumped me.

Amph.—Who is this Sosia?

Sos.—Myself, I say; how often must it be told you?

Amph.—But how say you? Have you been sleeping the while?

Sos.—Not the slightest in the world.

Amph.—Then, perhaps, you might perchance have seen some *Sosia* in your dreams.

Sos.—I am not in the habit of performing the orders of my master in a sleepy fashion. Awake I saw him, awake I now see you, awake I am talking, awake did he, a little while since, thump me about with his fists.

Amph.—What person did so?

Sos.—*Sosia*, that I myself—he, I say. Prithee, don't you understand?

Amph.—How, the plague, can any one possibly understand? You are jabbering such nonsense.

Sos.—But you'll know him shortly.

Amph.—Whom?

Sos.—You'll know this servant *Sosia*.

Amph.—Follow me this way, then; for it is necessary for me first to inquire into this. But take care that all the things that I ordered are now brought from the ship.

Sos.—I am both mindful and diligent that what you order shall be performed; together with the wine, I have not drunk up your commands.

Amph.—May the Gods grant, that, in the event, what you have said may prove untrue. (They stand apart.)

SCENE II.

Enter *Alcmena*, from the house, attended by *Thessala*.

Alcmena.—Is not the proportion of pleasures in life and in passing our existence short in comparison with what is disagreeable? So it is allotted to each man in life; so has it pleased the Gods that Sorrow should attend on Pleasure as her companion; but if aught of good befalls us, more of trouble and of ill forthwith attends us. For this do I now feel

by experience at home and in relation to myself, to whom delight has been imparted for a very short time, while I had the opportunity of seeing my husband for but one night; and now has he suddenly gone away hence from me before the dawn. Deserted do I now seem to myself, because he is absent from here, he whom before all I love. More of grief have I felt from the departure of my husband, than of pleasure from his arrival. But this, at least, makes me happy, that he has conquered the foe, and has returned home loaded with glory. Let him be absent, if only with fame acquired he betakes himself home. I shall bear and ever endure his absence with mind resolved and steadfast; if only this reward is granted me, that my husband shall be hailed the conqueror in the warfare, sufficient for myself will I deem it. Valor is the best reward; valor assuredly surpasses all things: liberty, safety, life, property and parents, country too, and children, by it are defended and preserved. Valor comprises everything in itself: all blessings attend him in whose possession is valor.

Amph.—(Apart.) By my troth, I do believe that I shall come much wished for by my wife, who loves me, and whom, in return, I love: especially, our enterprise crowned with success, the enemy vanquished, whom no one had supposed to be able to be conquered: these, under my conduct and command, at the first meeting, have we vanquished; but I know for sure that I shall come to her much wished for.

Sos.—(Aside.) Well, and don't you think that I shall come much wished for to my mistress?

(Amphitryon advances, at a distance, with Sosia.)

Alc.—(To herself.) Surely, this is my husband.

Amph.—(To Sosia.) Do you follow me this way.

Alc.—(To herself.) But why has he returned, when just now he said that he was in haste? Is he purposely trying me, and is he desirous to make proof of this, how much I regret his departure? By my faith, against no inclination of mine has he betaken himself home.

Sos.—Amphitryon, it were better for us to return to the ship.

Amph.—For what reason?

Sos.—Because there's no person at home to give us a breakfast on our arrival.

Amph.—How comes that now into your mind?

Sos.—Why, because we have come too late.

Amph.—How so?

Sos.—Because I see Alcmena standing before the house, with her stomach-full already.

Alc.—(Advancing.) I think that I shall now be doing my duty more, if I go to meet him. (They meet.)

Amph.—With joy, Amphitryon greets his longed-for wife—her, whom of all women in Thebes her husband deems by far the most excellent, and whom so much the Theban citizens truthfully extol as virtuous. Have you fared well all along? Do I arrive much wished for by you?

Sos.—(Aside.) I never saw one more so; for she greets her own husband not a bit more than a dog.

Amph.—When I see you pregnant, and so gracefully burdened, I am delighted.

Alc.—Prithæe, in the name of all that's good, why, for the sake of mockery, do you thus salute and address me, as though you hadn't lately seen me—as though now, for the first time, you were betaking yourself homeward here from the enemy? For now you are addressing me just as though you were seeing me after a long time.

Amph.—Why, really for my part, I have not seen you at all this day until now.

Alc.—Why do you deny it?

Amph.—Because I have learned to speak the truth.

Alc.—He does not do right, who unlearns the same that he has learned. Are you making trial what feelings I possess? But why are you returning hither so soon? Has an ill omen delayed you, or does the weather keep you back, you who have not gone away to your troops, as you were lately speaking of?

Amph.—Lately? How long since was this "lately?"

Alc.—You are trying me; but very lately, just now.

Amph.—Prithee, how can that possibly be as you say?—"but very lately, just now."

Alc.—Why, what do you imagine? That I, on the other hand, shall trifle with you who are playing with me, in saying that you are now come for the first time, you who but just now went away from here?

Amph.—Surely she is talking deliriously.

Sos.—Stop a little while, until she has slept out this one sleep.

Amph.—Is she not dreaming with her eyes open?

Alc.—Upon my faith, for my part I really am awake, and awake I am relating that which has happened; for, but lately, before daybreak, I saw both him (pointing at Sosia) and yourself.

Amph.—In what place?

Alc.—Here, in the house where you yourself dwell.

Amph.—It never was the fact.

Sos.—Will you not hold your peace? What if the vessel brought us here from the harbor in our sleep?

Amph.—Are you, too, going to back her as well?

Sos.—(Aside to Amphitryon.) What do you wish to be done? Don't you know, if you wish to oppose a raving Bacchanal, from a mad woman you'll render her more mad—she'll strike the oftener; if you humor her, after one blow you may overcome her?

Amph.—But, by my troth, this thing is resolved upon, somehow to rate her who this day has been unwilling to greet me on my arrival home.

Sos.—You'll only be irritating hornets.

Amph.—You hold your tongue. Alcmena, I wish to ask you one thing.

Alc.—Ask me anything you please.

Amph.—Is it frenzy that has come upon you, or does pride overcome you?

Alc.—How comes it into your mind, my husband, to ask me that?

Amph.—Because formerly you used to greet me on my arrival, and to address me in such manner as those women who are virtuous are wont their husbands. On my arrival home I've found that you have got rid of that custom.

Alc.—By my faith, indeed, I assuredly did both greet you yesterday, upon your arrival, at that very instant, and at the same time I inquired if you had continued in health all along, my husband, and I took your hand and gave you a kiss.

Sos.—What, did you welcome him yesterday?

Alc.—And you too, as well, Sosia.

Sos.—Amphitryon, I did hope that she was about to bring you forth a son; but she isn't gone with child.

Amph.—What then?

Sos.—With madness.

Alc.—Really I am in my senses, and I pray the Gods that in safety I may bring forth a son; but (to Sosia) hap-ill shall you be having, of he does his duty: for those ominous words, omen-maker, you shall catch what befits you.

Sos.—Why really an apple ought to be given to the lady thus pregnant, that there may be something for her to gnaw if she should begin to faint.

Amph.—Did you see me here yesterday?

Alc.—I did, I say, if you wish it to be ten times repeated.

Amph.—In your sleep, perhaps?

Alc.—No—I, awake, saw you awake.

Amph.—Woe to me!

Sos.—What's the matter with you?

Amph.—My wife is mad.

Sos.—She's attacked with black bile; nothing so soon turns people mad.

Amph.—When, madam, did you first find yourself affected?

Alc.—Why really, upon my faith, I'm well, and in my senses.

Amph.—Why, then, do you say that you saw me yesterday, whereas we were brought into harbor but last night? There did I dine, and there did I rest the livelong night on board ship, nor have I set my foot even here into the house, since,

with the army, I set out hence against the Teleboan foe, and since we conquered them.

Alc.—On the contrary, you dined with me, and you slept with me.

Amph.—How so?

Alc.—I'm telling the truth.

Amph.—On my honor, not in this matter, really; about other matters I don't know.

Alc.—At the very break of dawn you went away to your troops.

Amph.—By what means could I?

Sos.—She says right, according as she remembers; she's telling you her dream. But, madam, after you arose, you ought to have sacrificed to Jove, the disposer of prodigies, either with a salt cake or with frankincense.

Alc.—A mischief on your head!

Sos.—That's your own business, if you take due care.

Alc.—Now again this fellow is talking rudely to me, and that without punishment.

Amph.—(To *Sosia*.) You hold your tongue. (To *Alcmena*.) Do you tell me now—did I go away hence from you at daybreak?

Alc.—Who then but your own self recounted to me how the battle went there?

Amph.—And do you know that as well?

Alc.—Why, I heard it from your own self, how you had taken a very large city, and how you yourself had slain King *Pterelas*.

Amph.—What, did I tell you this?

Alc.—You yourself, this *Sosia* standing by as well.

Amph.—(To *Sosia*.) Have you heard me telling about this to-day?

Sos.—Where should I have heard you?

Amph.—Ask her.

Sos.—In my presence, indeed, it never took place, that I know of.

Alc.—It would be a wonder if he didn't contradict you.

Amph.—Sosia, come here and look at me.

Sos.—(Looks at him.) I am looking at you.

Amph.—I wish you to tell the truth, and I don't want you to humor me. Have you heard me this day say to her these things which she affirms?

Sos.—Prithee now, by my troth, are you, too, mad as well, when you ask me this, me, who, for my part, my own self now behold her in company with you for the first time?

Amph.—How now, madam? Do you hear him?

Alc.—I do, indeed, and telling an untruth.

Amph.—Do you believe neither him nor my own self, your husband?

Alc.—No; for this reason it is, because I most readily believe myself, and I am sure that these things took place just as I relate them.

Amph.—Do you say that I came yesterday?

Alc.—Do you deny that you went away from here to-day?

Amph.—I really do deny it, and I declare that I have now come home to you for the first time.

Alc.—Prithee, will you deny this too, that you to-day made me a present of a golden goblet, with which you said that you had been presented?

Amph.—By heavens, I neither gave it nor told you so: but I had so intended, and do so now, to present you with that goblet. But who told you this?

Alc.—Why, I heard it from yourself, and I received the goblet from your own hand. (She moves as if going.)

Amph.—Stay, stay, I entreat you. Sosia, I marvel much how she knows that I was presented there with this golden goblet, unless you have lately met her and told her all this.

Sos.—Upon my faith, I have never told her, nor have I ever beheld her except with yourself.

Amph.—What is the matter with this person?

Alc.—Should you like the goblet to be produced?

Amph.—I should like it to be produced.

Alc.—Be it so. Do you go, Thessala, and bring from indoors the goblet, with which my husband presented me to-day.

(Thessala goes into the house, and Amphitryon and Sosia walk on one side.)

Amph.—Sosia, do you step this way. Really, I do wonder extremely at this beyond the other wondrous matters, if she has got this goblet.

Sos.—And do you believe it, when it's carried in this casket, sealed with your own seal. (He shows the casket).

Amph.—Is the seal whole?

Sos.—Examine it.

Amph.—(Examining it.) All right, it's just as I sealed it up.

Sos.—Prithee, why don't you order her to be purified as a frantic person?

Amph.—By my troth, somehow there's need for it, for, if faith, she's certainly filled with sprites.

(Thessala returns with the goblet, and gives it to Alcmena.)

Alc.—What need is there of talking? See, here's the goblet; here it is.

Amph.—Give it me.

Alc.—Come, now then, look here, if you please, you who deny what is fact, and whom I shall now clearly convict in this case. Isn't this the goblet with which you were presented there?

Amph.—Supreme Jupiter! what do I behold? Surely this is that goblet. Sosia, I'm utterly confounded.

Sos.—Upon my faith, either this woman is a most consummate juggler, or the goblet must be in here (pointing to the casket).

Amph.—Come, then, open this casket.

Sos.—Why should I open it? It is securely sealed. The thing is cleverly contrived; you have brought forth another Amphitryon, I have brought forth another Sosia; now if the goblet has brought forth a goblet, we have all produced our doubles.

Amph.—I'm determined to open and examine it.

Sos.—Look, please, how the seal is, that you may not hereafter throw the blame on me.

Amph.—Now do open it. For she certainly is desirous to drive us mad with her talking.

Alc.—Whence then came this which was made a present to me, but from yourself?

Amph.—It's necessary for me to inquire into this.

Sos.—(Opening the casket.) Jupiter, O Jupiter!

Amph.—What is the matter with you?

Sos.—There's no goblet here in the casket.

Amph.—What do I hear.

Sos.—That which is the truth.

Amph.—But at your peril now, if it does not make its appearance.

Alc.—(Showing it.) Why, it does make its appearance.

Amph.—Who then gave it you?

Alc.—The person that's asking me the question.

Sos.—(To Amphitryon.) You are on the catch for me, inasmuch as you yourself have secretly run before me hither from the ship by another road, and have taken the goblet away from here and given it to her, and afterward you have secretly sealed it up again.

Amph.—Ah me! and are you too helping her frenzy as well? (To Alcmena.) Do you say that we arrived here yesterday?

Alc.—I do say so, and on your arrival you instantly greeted me, and I you, and I gave you a kiss.

Sos.—(Aside.) That beginning now about the kiss doesn't please me.

Amph.—Go on telling it.

Alc.—Then you bathed.

Amph.—What, after I bathed?

Alc.—You took your place at table.

Sos.—Bravo, capital! Now make further inquiry.

Amph.—(To *Sosia*.) Don't you interrupt. (To *Alcmena*.) Go on telling me.

Alc.—The dinner was served; you dined with me; I reclined together with you at the repast.

Amph.—What, on the same couch?

Alc.—On the same.

Sos.—Oh dear, I don't like this banquet.

Amph.—Now do let her give her proofs. (To *Alcmena*.) What, after we had dined?

Alc.—You said that you were inclined to go to sleep; the table was removed; thence we went to bed.

Amph.—Where did you lie?

Alc.—In the chamber, in the same bed together with yourself.

Amph.—You have proved my undoing.

Sos.—What's the matter with you?

Amph.—This very moment has she sent me to my grave.

Alc.—How so, pray?

Amph.—Don't address me.

Sos.—What's the matter with you?

Amph.—To my sorrow I'm undone, since, in my absence from here, dishonor has befallen her chastity.

Alc.—In Heaven's name, my lord, why, I beseech you, do I hear this from you?

Amph.—I, your lord? False one, don't call me by a false name.

Sos.—(Aside.) 'Tis an odd matter this, if indeed he has been made into my lady from my lord.

Alc.—What have I done, by reason of which these expressions are uttered to me?

Amph.—You yourself proclaim your own doings; do you inquire of me in what you have offended?

Alc.—In what have I offended you, if I have been with you to whom I am married?

Amph.—You, been with me? What is there of greater effrontery than this impudent woman? At least, if you were wanting in modesty of your own, you might have borrowed it.

Alc.—That criminality which you lay to my charge befits not my family. If you try to catch me in incontinence, you cannot convict me.

Amph.—Immortal Gods! do you at least know me, Sosia?

Sos.—Pretty well.

Amph.—Did I not dine yesterday on board ship in the Persian port?

Alc.—I have witnesses as well, who can confirm that which I say.

Sos.—I don't know what to say to this matter, unless, perchance, there is another Amphitryon, who, perhaps, though you yourself are absent, takes care of your business, and who, in your absence, performs your duties here. For about that counterfeit Sosia it is very surprising. Certainly, about this Amphitryon, now, it is another matter still more surprising.

Amph.—Some magician, I know not who, is bewildering this woman.

Alc.—By the realms of the supreme Sovereign I swear, and by Juno, the matron Goddess, whom for me to fear and venerate it is most especially fitting, that no mortal being except yourself alone has ever touched my person in contact with his so as to render me unchaste.

Amph.—I could wish that that was true.

Alc.—I speak the truth but in vain, since you will not believe me.

Amph.—You are a woman; you swear at random.

Alc.—She who has not done wrong, her it befits to be bold and to speak confidently and positively in her own behalf.

Amph.—That's very boldly said.

Alc.—Just as befits a virtuous woman.

Amph.—Say you so? By your own words you prove it.

Alc.—That which is called a dowry, I do not deem the same my dowry; but chastity, and modesty, and subdued desires, fear of the Gods, and love of my parents, and concord with my kindred; to be obedient to yourself, and bounteous to the good, ready to aid the upright.

Sos.—Surely, by my troth, if she tells the truth in this, she's perfect to the very ideal.

Amph.—Really I am so bewildered, that I don't know myself who I am.

Sos.—Surely you are Amphitryon; take you care, please, that you don't peradventure lose yourself; people are changing in such a fashion since we came from abroad.

Amph.—Madam, I'm resolved not to omit having this matter inquired into.

Alc.—I' faith, you'll do so quite to my satisfaction.

Amph.—How say you? Answer me; what if I bring your own kinsman, Naucrates, hither from the ship, who, together with me, has been brought on board the same ship; and if he denies that that has happened which you say has happened, what is proper to be done to you? Do you allege any reason why I should not at your cost dissolve this, our marriage?

Alc.—If I have done wrong, there is no reason.

Amph.—Agreed. Do you, Sosia, take these people in-doors. I'll bring Naucrates hither with me from the ship. (Exit.)

Sos.—(Going close to Alcmena.) Now then, there's no one here except ourselves; tell me the truth seriously, is there any Sosia in-doors who is like myself?

Alc.—Won't you hence away from me, fit servant for your master?

Sos.—If you command me, I'm off. (Goes into the house.)

Alc.—(To herself.) By heavens, it is a very wondrous proceeding, how it has pleased this husband of mine thus to accuse me falsely of a crime so foul. Whatever it is, I shall now learn it from my kinsman Naucrates.

(Goes into the house.)

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Jupiter.

Jupiter.—I am that Amphitryon, whose servant Sosia is the same that becomes Mercury when there is occasion—I, who dwell in the highest story, who sometimes, when it pleases me, become Jupiter. But, hither soon as ever I turn my steps, I become Amphitryon that moment, and I change

my garb. Now hither am I come for the sake of a compliment to you, that I may not leave this Comedy incomplete. I've come as well to bring assistance to Alcmena, whom, guiltless woman, her husband Amphitryon is accusing of dishonor. For what I myself have brought about, if that undeservedly should fall as an injury upon her in her innocence, it would be my blame. Now, as I have already begun, I'll again pretend that I am Amphitryon, and this day will I introduce extreme confusion into this household. Then afterward, at last, I'll cause the matter to be disclosed, and to Alcmena timely aid will I bring, and will cause that at one birth she shall bring forth, without pangs, both the child with which she is pregnant by her husband and that with which she is pregnant by myself. I have ordered Mercury forthwith to follow me, if I should wish to give him any commands. Now will I accost her. (He stands apart.)

SCENE II.

Enter Alcmena, from the house.

Alcmena.—I cannot remain in the house. That I should be thus accused by my husband of dishonor, incontinence, and disgrace! he cries aloud that things which have been done, have really not been done; and of things which have not been done, and of which I have not been guilty, he accuses me, and supposes that I shall treat it with indifference. By heavens, I will not do so, nor will I allow myself to be falsely charged with dishonor; but rather I'll either leave him, or make him give satisfaction and swear as well that he wishes unsaid the things which he has alleged against me in my innocence.

Jup.—(Apart.) This must be done by me, which she requires to be done, if I wish for her to receive me into her company as loving her: since that which I have done, that same conduct has proved to the detriment of Amphitryon, and since my love has already created trouble for him who is really guiltless, why now his wrath and his resentment toward her shall fall on me that am not accused.

Alc.—And lo! I see him, who just now was accusing wretched me of incontinence and dishonor.

Jup.—(Advancing.) Wife, I would discourse with you.
(She turns from him.) Why turn yourself away?

Alc.—Such is my disposition; I always hate to look upon my enemies.

Jup.—Heyday! enemies indeed!

Alc.—It is so, I speak the truth; unless you are going to allege that this is falsely said as well.

Jup.—(Offering to embrace her.) You are too angry.

Alc.—(Repulsing him.) Can't you keep your hands off? For surely if you were wise, or quite in your senses, with her, whom you deem and pronounce to be unchaste, you would neither hold discourse, in mirth or in seriousness, unless, indeed, you are more foolish than the most foolish.

Jup.—If I did say so, not a bit the more are you so, nor do I think you so, and therefore have I returned hither that I might excuse myself to you. For never has anything proved more grievous to my feelings than when I heard that you were angry with me. "Why did you charge me?" you will say. I'll tell you; by my troth, not that I deemed you to be unchaste; but I was trying your feelings, what you would do, and in what manner you would bring yourself to bear it. Really, I said these things to you just now in jest, for the sake of the joke. Do but ask *Sosia* this.

Alc.—But why don't you bring here my kinsman, *Naucrates*, whom you said just now that you would bring as a witness that you had not come here?

Jup.—If anything was said in joke, it isn't right for you to take it in earnest.

Alc.—I know how much this has pained me at heart.

Jup.—Prithce, *Alcmena* (taking her hand), by your right hand I do entreat you, grant me pardon; forgive me, don't be angry.

Alc.—By my virtue have I rendered these accusations vain. Since then I eschew conduct that's unchaste, I would wish to avoid imputations of unchastity. Fare you well, keep your own property to yourself, return me mine. Do you order any maids to be my attendants?

Jup.—Are you in your senses?

Alc.—If you don't order them, let me go alone; chastity shall I take as my attendant. (Going.)

Jup.—Stay—at your desire, I'll give my oath that I believe my wife to be chaste. If in that I deceive you, then, thee, supreme Jupiter, do I entreat that thou wilt ever be angered against Amphitryon.

Alc.—Oh! rather may he prove propitious.

Jup.—I trust that it will be so; for before you have I taken a truthful oath. Now then, you are not angry?

Alc.—I am not.

Jup.—You act properly. For in the life of mortals many things of this nature come to pass; and now they take their pleasures, again they meet with hardships. Quarrels intervene, again do they become reconciled. But if perchance any quarrels of this nature happen between them, when again they have become reconciled, twofold more loving are they between themselves than they were before.

Alc.—At the first you ought to have been careful not to say so; but if you excuse yourself to me for the same, it must be put up with.

Jup.—But bid the sacred vessels to be got ready for me, that I may fulfil all those vows which I made when with the army, in case I should return safe home.

Alc.—I'll take care of that.

Jup.—(To a servant.) Call out Sosia hither. Let him fetch Blepharo, the pilot that was on board my ship, to breakfast with us. (Aside.) He shall be fooled this day so as to go without his breakfast, while I shall drag Amphitryon hence by the throat.

Alc.—(Aside.) It's surprising what he can be arranging alone in secrecy with himself. But the door opens; Sosia's coming out.

SCENE III.

Enter Sosia, from the house.

Sosia.—Amphitryon, I'm here; if any way you have need of me, command me; your commands I will obey.

Jup.—Very opportunely are you come.

Sos.—Has peace been made then between you two? But since I see you in good humor, I'm delighted, and it is a pleasure to myself. And so does it seem becoming for a trusty servant to conduct himself; just as his superiors are, so should he be likewise; by their countenances he should fashion his own countenance; if his superiors are grave, let him be grave; if they rejoice, let him be merry. But come, answer me; have you two now come to a reconciliation?

Jup.—You are laughing at me, who know full well that these things were just now said by me in joke.

Sos.—In joke did you say it? For my part, I supposed that it was said seriously and in truthfulness.

Jup.—Still, I've made my excuses; and peace has been made.

Sos.—"Tis very good.

Jup.—I shall now perform the sacrifice in-doors, and the vows which I have made.

Sos.—So I suppose.

Jup.—Do you invite hither, in my name, Blepharo, the pilot, from the ship, so that when the sacrifice has been performed, he may breakfast with me.

Sos.—I shall be here again, while you'll be thinking that I'm there.

Jup.—Return here directly. (Exit Sosia.)

Alc.—Do you wish for anything else, but that I should go in-doors now, that the things that are requisite may be got ready?

Jup.—Go then, and take care that everything is prepared as soon as possible.

Alc.—Why, come in-doors whenever you please; I'll take care that there shall not be any delay.

Jup.—You say well, and just as befits an attentive wife.

(Alcmena goes into the house.)

SCENE IV.

Jupiter, alone.

Jup.—Now both of these, both servant and mistress, are, the pair of them, deceived, in taking me to be Amphitryon; egregiously do they err. Now, you immortal Sosia, take you care and be at hand for me. You hear what I say, although you are not present here. Take care that you contrive to drive away Amphitryon, on his arrival just now, by some means or other, from the house. I wish him to be cajoled, while I am within with his wife. Please take care that this is attended to just in such way as you know that I desire.

(Goes into Amphitryon's house.)

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Mercury, running, at the end of the stage.

Mercury.—Stand by and make room all of you, get you out of the way. And let not any person now be so presumptuous as to stand before me in the road. For surely, why, by my troth, should I, a God, be any less allowed to threaten the public, if it does not get out of my way, than a slave in Comedies? He is bringing news that the ship is safe, or else the approach of some angry old blade; whereas I am obeying the bidding of Jove, and by his command do I now hie me. For this reason, it is more fitting to get out of the road and to make room for me. My father calls me, I am following him, to his orders so given am I obedient. As it befits a son to be dutiful to his father, just so am I to my father; in his amours I encourage him, assist him, advise him, rejoice with him. If anything is pleasing to my father, that pleasure is an extremely great one for myself. Is he amorously disposed? He is wise; he does right, inasmuch as he follows his inclination. Now, my father wishes Amphitryon to be cajoled; I'll take care, Spectators, that he shall be rarely cajoled, while

you look on. I'll place a chaplet on my head, and pretend that I am drunk. And up there (pointing to the top of the house) will I get; from that spot, at the top of the house, I'll cleverly drive this person off when he comes hither: I'll take care that, sober, he shall be drenched. Afterward, his own servant Sosia will presently be suffering the punishment for it; he'll be accusing him of doing, this day, the things which I myself have done: what's that to me? It's proper for me to be obedient to my father; it's right to be subservient to his pleasure. But see! here is Amphitryon; he's coming. Now shall he be rarely fooled, if, indeed (to the audience), you are willing, by listening, to lend your attention. I'll go in-doors, and assume a garb that more becomes me; then I'll go up upon the roof, that I may drive him off from hence.

(Goes into the house, and fastens the door.)

SCENE II.

Enter Amphitryon.

Amphitryon.—(To himself.) Naucrates, whom I wanted to find, was not on board ship; neither at home nor in the city do I meet with any one that has seen him; for through all the streets have I crawled, the wrestling-rings and the perfumers' shops, to the market, too, and in the shambles, the school for exercise, and the Forum, the doctors' shops, the barbers' shops, and among all the sacred buildings. I'm wearied out with seeking him, and yet I nowhere meet with Naucrates. Now I'll go home, and from my wife will I continue to make inquiry into this matter, who the person was, by the side of whom she submitted her body to dishonor. For it were better that I was dead, than that I this day should leave this inquiry incomplete. (Goes up to the door.) But the house is closed. A pretty thing indeed! This is done just like the other things have been done: I'll knock at the door. (Knocks.) Open this door; ho there! is there anybody here? Is any one going to open this door?

SCENE III.

Mercury appears on the top of the house, with a chaplet on his head, pretending to be drunk.

Merc.—Who's that at the door?

Amph.—'Tis I.

Merc.—Who's "'tis I?"

Amph.—'Tis I that say so.

Merc.—For sure, Jupiter and all the Deities are angered with you who are banging at the door this way.

Amph.—In what manner?

Merc.—In this manner, that without a doubt you must be spending a wretched life.

Amph.—Sosia.

Merc.—Well; I'm Sosia, unless you think that I've forgotten myself. What do you want now?

Amph.—What, you rascal, and do you even ask me that, what it is I want?

Merc.—I do so ask you; you blockhead, you've almost broken the hinges from off the door. Did you fancy that doors were supplied us at the public charge? Why are you looking up at me, you stupid? What do you want now for yourself, or what fellow are you?

Amph.—You whip-scoundrel, do you even ask me who I am, you hell of elm-saplings? I' faith, this day I'll make you burn with smarts of the scourge for these speeches of yours.

Merc.—You surely must have formerly been a spendthrift in your young days.

Amph.—How so?

Merc.—Because in your old age you come begging a hap-ill of me for yourself.

Amph.—Slave! for your own torture do you give vent to these expressions this day.

Merc.—Now I'm performing a sacrifice to you.

Amph.—How?

Merc.—Why, because I devote you to ill-luck with this libation.
(Throws water on him.)

Amph.—What, you, devote me, you villain? If the Gods have not this day taken away my usual form, I'll take care that you shall be laden with bull's hide thongs, you victim of Saturn. So surely will I devote you to the cross and to torture. Come out of doors, you whip-knave.

Merc.—You shadowy ghost—you, frighten me with your threats? If you don't betake yourself off from here this instant, if you knock once more, if the door makes a noise with your little finger even, I'll break your head with this tile, so that with your teeth you may sputter out your tongue.

Amph.—What, rascal, would you be for driving me away from my own house? What, would you hinder me from knocking at my own door? I'll this instant tear it from off all its hinges.

Merc.—Do you persist?

Amph.—I do persist.

Merc.—Take that, then. (Throws a tile at him.)

Amph.—Scoundrel! at your master? If I lay hands upon you this day, I'll bring you to that pitch of misery, that you shall be miserable for evermore.

Merc.—Surely, you must have been playing the Bacchanal, old gentleman.

Amph.—Why so?

Merc.—Inasmuch as you take me to be your slave.

Amph.—What? I—take you?

Merc.—Plague upon you! I know no master but Amphitryon.

Amph.—(To himself.) Have I lost my form? It's strange that Sosia shouldn't know me. I'll make trial. (Calling out.) How now! Tell me who I appear to be? Am I not really Amphitryon?

Merc.—Amphitryon? Are you in your senses? Has it not been told you before, old fellow, that you have been playing the Bacchanal, to be asking another person who you are? Get away, I recommend you, don't be troublesome while Am-

phitryon, who has just come back from the enemy, is in the company of his wife.

Amph.—What wife?

Merc.—Alcmena.

Amph.—What man?

Merc.—How often do you want it told? Amphitryon, my master—don't be troublesome.

Amph.—Who's he sleeping with?

Merc.—Take care that you don't meet with some mishap in trifling with me this way.

Amph.—Prithee, do tell me, my dear Sosia.

Merc.—More civilly said—with Alcmena.

Amph.—Alas!—wretch that I am!

Merc.—(To the audience). It really is a gain which he imagines to be a misfortune.

Amph.—Sosia!

Merc.—What, the plague, about Sosia?

Amph.—Don't you know me, you whip-scurdrel?

Merc.—I know that you are a troublesome fellow, who have no need to go buy a lawsuit.

Amph.—Still once more—am I not your master Amphitryon?

Merc.—You are Bacchus himself, and not Amphitryon. How often do you want to be told? Any times more? My master, Amphitryon, is in the house with Alcmena. If you persist, I'll produce him here, and not without your great discomfiture.

Amph.—I wish him to be fetched. (Aside.) I pray that this day, in return for my services, I may not lose house, wife, and household, together with my figure.

Merc.—Well, I'll fetch him; but, in the meantime, do you mind about the door, please. If you are troublesome, you shan't escape without my making a sacrifice of you.

(He retires into the house.)

Amph.—Ye Gods, by my trust in you, what madness is distracting my household? What wondrous things have I seen

since I arrived from abroad? Why, it's true, surely, what was once heard tell of, how that men of Attica were transformed in Arcadia, and remained as savage wild beasts, and were not ever afterward known unto their parents.

SCENE IV.

Enter Blepharo and Sosia, at a distance.

Blepharo.—What's this, Sosia? Great marvels are these that you are telling of. Do you say that you found another Sosia at home exactly like yourself?

Sosia.—I do say so—but, hark you, since I have produced a Sosia, Amphitryon an Amphitryon, how do you know whether you, perchance, may not be producing another Blepharo? Oh that the Gods would grant that you as well, belabored with fists, and with your teeth knocked out, going without your breakfast, might credit this. For I, that other Sosia, that is to say, who am yonder, has mauled me in a dreadful manner.

Bleph.—Really, it is wonderful; but it's as well to mend our pace; for, as I perceive, Amphitryon is waiting for us, and my empty stomach is grumbling.

Amph.—(Apart.) And why do I mention foreign legends? More wondrous things they relate to have happened among our Theban race in former days; that mighty searcher for Europa, attacking the monster sprung from Mars, suddenly produced his enemies from the serpent-seed; and in that battle fought, brother pressed on brother with lance and helm; the Epirote land, too, beheld the author of our race, together with the daughter of Venus, gliding as serpents. From on high supreme Jove thus willed it; thus destiny directs. All the noblest of our country, in return for their bright achievements, are pursued with direful woes. This fatality is pressing hard on me—still I could endure disasters so great, and submit to woes hardly to be endured——

Sos.—Blepharo.

Bleph.—What's the matter?

Sos.—I don't know; I suspect something wrong.

Bleph.—Why?

Sos.—Look, please, our master, like an humble courtier, is walking before the door bolted fast.

Bleph.—It's nothing; walking to and fro, he's looking for an appetite.

Sos.—After a singular fashion, indeed; for he has shut the door, that it mayn't escape out of the house.

Bleph.—You do go yelping on.

Sos.—I go neither yelping on nor barking on; if you listen to me, observe him. I don't know why he's by himself alone; he's making some calculation, I suppose. I can hear from this spot what he says—don't be in a hurry.

Amph.—(Apart.) How much I fear lest the Gods should blot out the glory I have acquired in the conquest of the foe. In wondrous manner do I see the whole of my household in commotion. And then my wife, so full of viciousness, incontinence, and dishonor, kills me outright. But about the goblet, it is a singular thing; yet the seal was properly affixed. And what besides? She recounted to me the battles I had fought; Pterelas, too, besieged and bravely slain by my own hand. Aye, aye—now I know the trick; this was done by Sosia's contrivance, who as well has disgracefully presumed to-day to get before me on my arrival.

Sos.—(To Blepharo.) He's talking about me, and in terms that I had rather not. Prithce, don't let's accost this man until he has disclosed his wrath.

Bleph.—Just as you please.

Amph.—(Apart.) If it is granted me this day to lay hold of that whip-scoundrel, I'll show him what it is to deceive his master, and to assail me with threats and tricks.

Sos.—Do you hear him?

Bleph.—I hear him.

Sos.—That implement (pointing to Amphitryon's walking-stick) is a burden for my shoulder-blades. Let's accost the man, if you please. Do you know what is in the habit of being commonly said?

Bleph.—What you are going to say, I don't know; what you'll have to endure I pretty well guess.

Sos.—It's an old adage—"Hunger and delay summon anger to the nostrils."

Bleph.—Aye, and well suited to the occasion. Let's address him directly—Amphitryon!

Amph.—(Looking round.) Is it Blepharo I hear? It's strange why he's come to me. Still, he presents himself opportunely, for me to prove the guilty conduct of my wife. Why have you come here to me, Blepharo?

Bleph.—Have you so soon forgotten how early in the morning you sent Sosia to the ship, that I might take a repast with you to-day?

Amph.—Never in this world was it done. But where is that scoundrel?

Bleph.—Who?

Amph.—Sosia.

Bleph.—See, there he is. (Points at him.)

Amph.—(Looking about.) Where?

Bleph.—Before your eyes; don't you see him?

Amph.—I can hardly see for anger, so distracted has that fellow made me this day. You shall never escape my making a sacrifice of you. (Offers to strike Sosia, on which Blepharo prevents him.) Do let me, Blepharo.

Bleph.—Listen, I pray.

Amph.—Say on, I'm listening—(gives a blow to Sosia)—you take that.

Sos.—For what reason? Am I not in good time? I couldn't have gone quicker, if I had betaken myself on the oarlike wings of Dædalus. (Amphitryon tries to strike him again.)

Bleph.—Prithee, do leave him alone; we couldn't quicken our pace any further.

Amph.—Whether it was the pace of a man on stilts or that of the tortoise, I'm determined to be the death of this villain. (Striking him at each sentence.) Take that for the roof; that for the tiles; that for closing the door; that for making fun of your master; that for your abusive language.

Bleph.—What injury has he been doing to you?

Amph.—Do you ask? Shut out of doors, from that house-top (pointing to it) he has driven me away from my house.

Sos.—What, I?

Amph.—What did you threaten that you would do if I knocked at that door? Do you deny it, you scoundrel?

Sos.—Why shouldn't I deny it? See, he's sufficiently a witness with whom I have just now come; I was sent on purpose that by your invitation I might bring him to your house.

Amph.—Who sent you, villain?

Sos.—He who asks me the question.

Amph.—When, of all things?

Sos.—Some little time since—not long since—just now. When you were reconciled at home to your wife.

Amph.—Bacchus must have demented you.

Sos.—May I not be paying my respects to Bacchus this day, nor yet to Ceres. You ordered the vessels to be made clean, that you might perform a sacrifice, and you sent me to fetch him (pointing to Blepharo), that he might breakfast with you.

Amph.—Blepharo, may I perish outright if I have either been in the house, or if I have sent him. (To Sosia.) Tell me—where did you leave me?

Sos.—At home, with your wife Alcmena. Leaving you, I flew toward the harbor, and invited him in your name. We are come, and I've not seen you since till now.

Amph.—Villainous fellow! With my wife, say you? You shall never go away without getting a beating.

(Gives him a blow.)

Sos.—(Crying out.) Blepharo!

Bleph.—Amphitryon, do let him alone, for my sake, and listen to me.

Amph.—Well then, I'll let him alone. What do you want? Say on.

Bleph.—He has just now been telling me most extraordinary marvels. A juggler, or a sorcerer, perhaps, has enchanted all this household of yours. Do inquire in other

quarters, and examine how it is. And don't cause this poor fellow to be tortured, before you understand the matter.

Amph.—You give good advice; let's go in, I want you also to be my advocate against my wife. (Knocks at the door.)

SCENE V.

Enter Jupiter, from the house.

Jupiter.—Who with such weighty blows has been shaking this door on all the hinges? Who has been making such a great disturbance for this long while before the house? If I find him out, I'll sacrifice him to the shades of the Teleboans. There's nothing, as the common saying is, that goes on well with me to-day. I left Blepharo and Sosia that I might find my kinsman Naucrates; him I have not found, and them I have lost. But I espy them; I'll go meet them, to inquire if they have any news.

Sos.—Blepharo, that's our master that's coming out of the house; but this man's the sorcerer.

Bleph.—Oh, Jupiter! What do I behold? This is not, but that is, Amphytryon; if this is, why really that cannot be he, unless, indeed, he is double.

Jup.—See now, here's Sosia with Blepharo; I'll accost them the first. Well, Sosia, come to us at last? I'm quite hungry.

Sos.—Didn't I tell you, Blepharo, that this one was the sorcerer?

Amph.—Nay, Theban citizens, I say that this is he (pointing to Jupiter) who in my house has made my wife guilty of incontinence, through whom I find a store of unchastity laid up for me.

Sos.—(To Jupiter.) Master, if now you are hungry, crammed full of fisticuffs, I betake me to you.

Amph.—Do you persist, whip-scurdrel?

Sos.—Hie thee to Acheron, sorcerer.

Amph.—What, I a sorcerer? (Strikes him.) Take that.

Jup.—What madness possesses you, stranger, for you to be beating my servant?

Amph.—Your servant?

Jup.—Mine.

Amph.—You lie.

Jup.—Sosia, go in-doors, and take care the breakfast is got ready while I'm sacrificing this fellow.

Sos.—I'll go. (*Aside.*) Amphitryon, I suppose, will receive the other Amphitryon as courteously as I, that other Sosia, did me, Sosia, a while ago. Meantime, while they are contending, I'll turn aside into the victualling department: I'll clean out all the dishes, and all the vessels I'll drain.

(Goes into the house.)

SCENE VI.

Jupiter, Amphitryon, and Blepharo.

Jup.—Do you say that I lie?

Amph.—You lie, I say, you corrupter of my family.

Jup.—For that disgraceful speech, I'll drag you along here, seizing you by the throat. (*Seizes him by the throat.*)

Amph.—Ah, wretched me!

Jup.—But you should have had a care of this beforehand.

Amph.—Blepharo, aid me!

Bleph.—(*Aside.*) The two are so exactly alike that I don't know which to side with. Still, so far as possible, I'll put an end to their contention. (*Aloud.*) Amphitryon, don't slay Amphitryon in fight; let go his throat, I pray.

Jup.—Are you calling this fellow Amphitryon?

Bleph.—Why not? Formerly he was but one, but now he has become double. While you are wanting to be he, the other, too, doesn't cease to be of his form. Meanwhile, prithee, do leave go of his neck.

Jup.—I will leave go. (*Lets go of Amphitryon.*) But tell me, does that fellow appear to you to be Amphitryon?

Bleph.—Really, both of you do.

Amph.—Oh supreme Jupiter! when this day didst thou take from me my form? I'll proceed to make inquiry of him; are you Amphitryon?

Jup.—Do you deny it?

Amph.—Downright do I deny it, inasmuch as in Thebes there is no other Amphitryon besides myself.

Jup.—On the contrary, no other besides myself; and, in fact, do you, Blepharo, be the judge.

Bleph.—I'll make this matter clear by proofs, if I can. (To Amphitryon.) Do you answer first.

Amph.—With pleasure.

Bleph.—Before the battle with the Taphians was begun by you, what orders did you give me?

Amph.—The ship being in readiness, for you carefully to keep close to the rudder.

Jup.—That if our people should take to flight, I might betake myself in safety thither.

Bleph.—Anything else as well?

Amph.—That the bag loaded with treasure should be carefully guarded.

Jup.—Because the money——

Bleph.—Hold your tongue, you, if you please; it's my place to ask. Did you know the amount?

Jup.—Fifty Attic talents.

Bleph.—He tells the truth to a nicety. And you (to Amphitryon), how many Philippeans?

Amph.—Two thousand.

Jup.—And obols twice as many.

Bleph.—Each of you states the matter correctly. Inside the bag one of you must have been shut up.

Jup.—Attend, please. With this right hand, as you know, I slew King Pterelas; his spoils I seized, and the goblet from which he had been used to drink I brought away in a casket; I made a present of it to my wife, with whom this day at home I bathed, I sacrificed, and slept.

Amph.—Ah me! what do I hear? I scarcely am myself. For, awake, I am asleep; awake, I am in a dream; alive and well, I come to destruction. I am that same Amphitryon, the descendant of Gorgophone, the general of the Thebans, and the sole combatant for Creon against the Teleboans; I, who have subdued by my might the Acarnanians and the Taphians, and, by my consummate warlike prowess, their king. Over these have I appointed Cephalus, the son of the great Deloneus.

Jup.—I am he who by warfare and my valor crushed the hostile ravagers. They had destroyed Electryon and the brothers of my wife. Wandering through the Ionian, the *Ægean*, and the Cretan seas, with piratical violence they laid waste Achæa, *Ætolia*, and Phocis.

Amph.—Immortal Gods! I cannot trust my own self, so exactly does he relate all the things that happened there. Consider, *Blepharo*.

Bleph.—One thing only remains; if so it is, do you be Amphitryons both of you.

Jup.—I knew what you would say. The scar that I have on the muscle of my right arm, from the wound which *Pterelas* gave me—

Bleph.—Well, that.

Amph.—Quite to the purpose.

Jup.—See you! look, behold!

Bleph.—Uncover, and I'll look.

Jup.—We have uncovered. Look!

(They show their naked arms.)

Bleph.—(Looking at the right arm of each.) Supreme Jupiter, what do I behold? On the right-arm muscle of each, in the same spot, the scar clearly appears with the same mark, reddish and somewhat livid, just as it has first commenced to close. Reasoning is at a standstill, all judgment is struck dumb; I don't know what to do. Do you settle these matters between yourselves; I'm off, for I have business; and I do not think that I have ever anywhere beheld such extraordinary wonders.

Amph.—Blepharo, I pray that you'll stay as my advocate, and not go away.

Bleph.—Farewell. What need is there of me for an advocate, who don't know which of the two to side with?

Jup.—I'm going hence in-doors: Alcmena is in labor.

(Exit Blepharo, and Jupiter goes into Amphitryon's house.)

Amph.—(Aloud to himself.) I'm undone, wretch that I am; for what am I to do, when my advocates and friends are now forsaking me? Never, by heavens, shall he deride me unrevenged, whoever he is. Now will I betake myself straight to the king, and tell him of the matter as it has happened. By my faith, I will this day take vengeance on this Thessalian sorcerer, who has wrongfully distracted the minds of my household. But where is he? (Looking around.) By my troth, he's off into the house, to my wife, I suppose. What other person lives in Thebes more wretched than myself? What now shall I do? I, whom all men deny and deride just as they please. I am resolved; I'll burst into the house; there, whatever person I perceive, whether maid-servant or man-servant, whether wife or whether paramour, whether father or whether grandfather, I'll behead that person in the house; neither Jupiter nor all the Deities shall hinder me from this, even if they would, but that I'll do just as I have resolved.

(As he advances to the door, it thunders, and he falls in a swoon upon the ground.)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Bromia, from the house, Amphitryon lying on the ground.

Bromia.—(To herself.) The hopes and resources of my life lie buried in my breast, nor is there any boldness in my heart, but what I have lost it. So much to me do all things seem, the sea, the earth, the heavens, to be conspiring, that now I may be crushed, that I may be destroyed. Ah, wretched me! I know not what to do. Prodiges so great have come

to pass within the house. Ah! woe is me! I'm sick at heart, some water I could wish! I'm overpowered and I'm utterly undone. My head is aching, and I cannot hear, nor do I see well with my eyes. No woman is there more wretched than myself, nor can one seem to be more so. Thus has it this day befallen my mistress; for when she invoked for herself the Deities of travail, what rumblings and grumbings, crashes and flashes; suddenly, how instantaneously did it thunder, and how woundy loud. On the spot where each one stood, at the peal he fell; then some one, I know not who, exclaimed in a mighty voice, "Alcmena, succor is at hand, fear not: propitious both to thee and thine, the Ruler of the Heavens comes. Arise," it said, "ye who have fallen down in your terror through dread of me." As I lay, I arose; I fancied that the house was in flames. Then Alcmena called me; and then did that circumstance strike me with horror. Fears for my mistress took possession of me; I ran to her to inquire what she wanted; and then I beheld that she had given birth to two male children; nor yet did any one of us perceive when she was delivered, or indeed expect it. (Sees Amphitryon.) But what's this? Who's this old man that's lying thus before our house? Has Jupiter then smitten him with his thunders? By my troth, I think so; for, oh Jupiter! he is in a lethargy just like one dead. I'll approach, that I may learn who it is. (She advances.) Surely, this is my master Amphitryon. (Calls aloud.) Ho! Amphitryon!

Amph.—I'm dead.

Brom.—Arise.

Amph.—I'm slain outright.

Brom.—Give me your hand. (Takes his hand.)

Amph.—(Recovering.) Who is it that has hold of me?

Brom.—Bromia, your maid-servant.

Amph.—(Rising.) I tremble all over, to such a degree has Jove pealed against me. And no otherwise is it than if I had come hither from Acheron. But why have you come out of the house?

Brom.—The same alarm has scared ourselves, affrighted with horror; in the house where you yourself dwell, have I

seen astounding prodigies. Woe to me, Amphytryon; even now do my senses fail me to such a degree.

Amph.—Come now, tell me; do you know me to be your master Amphytryon?

Brom.—I do know it.

Amph.—Look even once again.

Brom.—I do know it.

Amph.—She alone of all my household has a sane mind.

Brom.—Nay but, really, they are all of them sane.

Amph.—But my wife causes me to be insane by her own shameful practices.

Brom.—But I'll make you, Amphytryon, to be holding other language; that you may understand that your wife is dutiful and chaste, upon that subject I will in a few words discover some tokens and some proofs. In the first place of all, Alomena has given birth to two sons.

Amph.—Two, say you?

Brom.—Two.

Amph.—The Gods preserve me!

Brom.—Allow me to speak, that you may know that all the Deities are propitious to yourself and to your wife.

Amph.—Say on.

Brom.—After that, this day, your wife began to be in labor, when the pangs of childbirth came on, as is the custom with women in travail, she invoked the immortal Gods to give her aid, with washed hands and with covered head. Then forthwith it thundered with most tremendous crash. At first we thought that your house was falling; all your house shone bright, as though it had been made of gold.

Amph.—Prithee, relieve me quickly from this, since you have kept me long enough in suspense. What happened then?

Brom.—While these things were passing, meanwhile, not one of us heard your wife groaning or complaining; and thus, in fact, without pain was she delivered.

Amph.—Then do I rejoice at this, whatever she has merited at my hands.

Brom.—Leave that alone, and hear these things which I shall tell you. After she was delivered, she bade us wash the babes; we commenced to do so. But that child which I washed, how stout, how very powerful he is; and not a person was there, able to wrap him in the swaddling-clothes.

Amph.—Most wondrous things you tell of. If these things are true, I do not apprehend but that succor has been brought to my wife from heaven.

Brom.—Now shall I make you own to things more wondrous still. After he was laid in the cradle, two immense crested serpents glided down through the skylight; instantly they both reared their heads.

Amph.—Ah me!

Brom.—Be not dismayed—but the serpents began to gaze upon all around. After they beheld the children, quickly they made toward the cradle; I, fearing for the children, alarmed for myself, going backward, began to draw and pull the cradle to and fro, and so much the more fiercely did the serpents pursue. After that one of the children caught sight of the serpents, he quickly leapt from the cradle, straightway he made an attack upon them, and suddenly he grasped them, one in each hand.

Amph.—You tell of wondrous things; a very fearful exploit do you relate; for at your words horror steals upon the limbs of wretched me. What happened then? Say on.

Brom.—The child slew both the serpents. While these things are passing, in a loud voice there calls upon your wife—

Amph.—What person—?

Brom.—Jupiter, the supreme Ruler of Gods and men. He said that he was his own son who had overcome those serpents; the other, he said, was your child.

Amph.—By my troth, I am not sorry if I am allowed to take my half of a blessing in partnership with Jupiter. Go home, and bid the sacred vessels to be at once prepared for me, that with many victims I may seek my peace with supreme Jove. I will apply to Tiresias the soothsayer, and consult him what he considers ought to be done; at the same time I'll relate to him this matter just as it has happened.

(It thunders.) But what means this? How dreadfully it thunders! Ye Gods, your mercy, I do entreat.

SCENE II.

Jupiter appears, in his own character, above.

Jupiter.—Be of good cheer, Amphitryon; I am come to thy aid: thou hast nothing to fear; all diviners and soothsayers let alone. What is to be, and what has past, I will tell thee; and so much better than they can, inasmuch as I am Jupiter. First of all, I have caused Alcmena to be pregnant with a son. Thou, too, didst cause her to be pregnant, when thou didst set out upon the expedition; at one birth has she brought forth the two together. One of these, the one that is sprung from my parentage, shall bless thee with deathless glory by his deeds. Do thou return with Alcmena to your former affection; she merits not that thou shouldst impute it to her as her blame; by my power has she been compelled thus to act. I now return to the heavens. (He ascends.)

Amph.—I'll do as thou dost command me; and I entreat thee to keep thy promises. I'll go in-doors to my wife. I dismiss the aged Tiresias from my thoughts.

An Actor.

Spectators, now, for the sake of supreme Jove, give loud applause.

INES MENDO;
OR,
THE TRIUMPH OF PREJUDICE.

BY
CLARA GAZUL

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON ESTEBAN DE MENDOZA.

JUAN MENDO.

DON CÆSAR BELMONTE (Portuguese Officer).

CORREGIDOR OF BADAJOS.

PEDRO (Servant to Esteban).

HOST.

DONNA INES DE MENDOZA.

DONNA SERAFINE (Duchess of Montalvan).

ABBESS OF THE URSULINES at Badajos.

*SCENE—THE CHATEAU DE MENDOZA
IN ESTREMADURA, AT ELVAS, AND
AT BADAJOS.*

PRELUDE.

In 1825 there appeared in Paris a fairly bulky volume purporting to contain the dramatic works of one Clara Gazul, said to be a Spanish comedienne. The volume was provided with an apparatus of notes furnished by the alleged translator, Joseph L'Estrange, in explanation of various passages which, he claimed, were clever but untranslatable. It contained, in addition, a highly romantic biography of Senorita Clara. Encomiums were fairly showered upon the work by the French critics. "Ah!" said a Spanish man of letters to a group of literary celebrities one day, "you think the work brilliant seen through the medium of translation; if you had but read it as I have, in the Spanish original!" Notwithstanding this assertion there was no Spanish original, the plays being merely masterpieces of *supercherie* by the French author, Prosper Merimee.

This play, it will be noted, bears a sub-title, *The Triumph of Prejudice*. It was preceded by one with the sub-title of *Prejudice Vanquished*, and some knowledge of the earlier play is necessary to properly understand this. Ines is the daughter of Juan Mendo, the public executioner at Monclar, in Galicia. His occupation—universally regarded in Spain with horror—is unknown even to his daughter. Don Esteban, a young nobleman, has fallen in love with Ines and wishes to marry her, whereupon the father confesses his occupation to the daughter, and both decide that her marriage is impossible. Meanwhile Don Esteban meets a typical Castilian gal-

lant, Don Carlos. The scene that follows is so thoroughly Spanish in treatment and spirit that we cannot refrain from quoting it somewhat *in extenso* as a specimen of Merimee at his best:

Don Esteban.—What the devil brings you here? I thought you would never quit the pleasures of Madrid.

Don Carlos.—I love the chase, and am on leave of absence with my father, who is Alcade of this rascally hole, called Monclar. And you—what are you doing here?

Don Este.—My story is the same. My father has just bought an estate in this neighborhood.—Have you killed anything?

Don Carl.—No, I have not fired a shot! I have just dismissed my equipage. To tell you the truth, I was well enough pleased to stroll a little in this quarter.

Don Este.—Ah! why?

Don Carl.—I pursue game which you love much, my dear Baron. Come, a wager that some intrigue has brought you to this newly-purchased estate!

Don Este.—In truth, no—what a strange supposition!

Don Carl.—Listen, then. Three days ago, on coming to this execrable hole, I remarked a charming peasant girl who lives in the neighborhood. Hold! do you see that house at a distance? It is there she lives.

Don Este.—Mendo's cottage!

Don Carl.—A delicious girl, my dear Baron, though daughter of a husbandman, as it would appear; a beautiful shape, her eyes and hair jet-black, hands passable—there, however, is her weak side. All things considered, I am determined to have her.

Don Este.—Captain, the person of whom you speak is not one of those who are so easy to be had.

Don Carl.—A peasant girl!

Don Este.—Peasant or not, I beg you will sport in another direction.

Don Carl.—Ah! ah! to all appearance then you have the priority. Be it so—but two persons may very well course the same hare.

Don Este.—A truce to pleasantry! Learn, sir, that this peasant girl, at whose expense you are so jocular, will tomorrow be my wife.

Don Carl.—Your wife!

Don Este.—Yes, sir—my wife.

Don Carl.—Hah! hah! hah! the joke is excellent! How I admire the gravity of your air! Well, now, you know that, between friends, one makes over these conquests after a fortnight's enjoyment!

Don Este.—Once more, sir—I speak very seriously—pray, from this moment, regard Ines Mendo as the Baroness de Mendoza.

Don Carl.—A peasant girl the Baroness de Mendoza! Excellent!—well played! Support your character!—Observe that hypocritical air!

Don Este.—Will you be quiet?

Don Carl.—After the honeymoon you will be more tractable. I may have her then!—hah! hah! hah!

Don Este.—(Striking him.) There is a proof I speak seriously.

Don Carl.—(Drawing his sword.) I shall chastise your insolence.
, (They fight; Don Carlos is killed.)

Don Este.—There, you will banter no more. Now, let me look to myself.—In Provence they are so strangely severe in these sort of affairs. I shall take refuge at Madrid; but I must first bid adieu to Ines. My father will bring her to the capital, and my marriage will be delayed but a day or two.

(He goes out. Two peasants enter.)

1st Peasant.—They are as thick as vermin at present; all the disbanded soldiers become thieves—for my part, I don't fear them. The other day I made two take to their heels, whom I met near Navaga toward the fall of the evening. I was cutting wood, when, behold ye, one of these rascals lying flat upon the ground— (He stumbles over the body.) Take my money, gentlemen, but spare my life!

2d Peasant.—Fool! here is a man who will harm no one. My God, it's the captain, the son of our Alcade.

1st Peasant.—What a hole he has in the middle of his belly!

2d Peasant.—Hold, hold! do you see that man there endeavoring to escape? He is the assassin, no doubt of it.

Shortly afterward Don Esteban is condemned to death, but Mendo, instead of striking off the lover's head, places his own hand upon the block and cuts it off. At this interesting moment the king passes and offers to pardon Don Esteban upon condition that he will immediately marry the executioner's daughter. The young nobleman rises to the occasion and replies, "It is my ardent desire," and the play closes with a wish expressed by the king that "thus may prejudice be destroyed throughout my whole Empire."

DAY I. SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Château de Mendoza.

Don Esteban—Ines.

Don Esteban.—Well! will you never correct yourself? must you always be repeating your village phrases?

Ines.—How can I help it? what is bred in the marrow will never come out of the bone.

Don Este.—A pretty proverb in the mouth of the Baroness de Mendoza!

Ines.—You do nothing but tease me about trifles. One has not a moment's peace with you.

Don Este.—Ah!

Ines.—Is it my fault that you are out of temper? Because our neighbors annoy us, must I suffer for it?

Don Este.—Impertinents! but I shall be revenged on them!

Ines.—Why seek them out in their little country-houses to invite them here? They are as poor as church mice, and vain as peacocks—would think themselves, indeed, dishonored, to show us the least respect! And all on account of my poor father! Dearly has he purchased his nobility! You ought to remember it, Esteban.

Don Este.—Dear Ines, I shall never forget it! But tell me, would not the calmest man in the world be ruffled to see these lordlings arrive one after the other with the same story? "My wife, the countess such-a-one, is indisposed."—"Donna Isabella has a cold!" And then their studied impertinence toward your father! The affectation of never calling you Donna Ines—of never addressing their conversation to you! —Oh! I was so enraged.

Ines.—Nonsense! laugh at it.

Don Este.—Laugh! I see nothing to laugh at. And, by the way, your silly speeches and Galician gibberish give ample cause for ridicule. Why say, you had yourself prepared those grey peas? Is it becoming in a person of your station to turn cook?

Ines.—You used to think I dressed them so well!

Don Este.—What a subject of ridicule for a month at least! Madame the Baroness shelling her peas!

Ines.—Peas or not, they eat of them like persons who fast often at home.

Don Este.—Then, in spite of a thousand warnings, you never fail to call me, my heart!—can there be anything more ridiculous?

Ines.—Unkind! who would believe, that formerly you scolded me for calling you my Lord Baron? During the honeymoon, you embraced me whenever I called you my heart.

Don Este.—You can give me no name which recalls more pleasing recollections; but observe, love, for the world—before these contemptible, impertinent lordlings, we must assume an air of dignity.

Ines.—Well, I'll do all I can. You must not frown though! Come, let us embrace in sign of peace!

Don Este.—My charming Ines! could I ever have an ill thought toward you? it was for you alone I suffered yesterday. —Gods! when I think of it, my anger breaks out afresh. Fools! refusing to dine with you!

Ines.—Their society is not sufficiently agreeable to regret its loss.

Enter a Servant.

Servant.—Letters, my lord.

(Retires.)

Don Este.—Whose writing is this? I don't know it. (Reads.) "Don Gil Lampuedo y Mello de la Porra, presents his compliments to Don Esteban Sandoval, Baron de Mendoza, and requests the honor of his presence at the Château de la Porra, on Tuesday next, to meet the ladies and gentlemen of the neighborhood." And you not invited! he shall pay dear for his insolence! (Tears the letter.) I'll make such an example of him as shall teach politeness, for the future, to the whole family of the Porras.

Ines.—My dear Esteban! you frighten me so much when you are angry! If you love me, be calm.

Don Este.—You know not what a gentleman suffers, whose honor is outraged.

Ines.—My love!

Don Este.—Don Gil, or Don devil! I'll soon make you see——

Ines.—He is below your notice. But hold! read the other letter; it is so amusing to——

Don Este.—I see the wretch! (Reading the address of the letter.) Ha!

Ines.—What's the matter?

Don Este.—A letter from the Duchess de Montalvan.

Ines.—And you know her writing so well, that you guess from whence it comes, merely on reading the direction!

Don Este.—Oh! it is nothing but—Yes, I knew her very well formerly.

Ines.—An old flame?

Don Este.—Why, something like it—that is before—There! read it yourself.

Ines.—How generous! (Giving him back the letter.) I must not be less so.

Don Este.—(Reading aloud.) "Dear Baron——"

Ines.—(Laughing.) "Dear Baron—" Oh! read it to yourself.

Don Este.—"Dear Baron, I am about to quit Madrid, or

rather fly from it. I shall pass into Portugal, for reasons you shall know hereafter. Would you fear to receive a proscribed person in your château, for a few hours only? So you have been foolish enough to marry; and, if report be true —" (Reads to himself.)

Ines.—Read aloud, Baron, I beg of you.

Don Este.—(Pretending to read.) "And if report be true—you—marry—Adieu! Serafine."

Ines.—Oh! you are not yet cunning enough, Esteban. "And if report be true—you—marry—Adieu! Serafine." Is that the style of a duchess? I think I could write better myself.

Don Este.—Madcap! she will arrive to-day I suppose—perhaps immediately. Go, Ines! arrange your dress a little; you must appear in all your beauty before her. She's an antiquated belle, and I should like to pique her. You are rather pale to-day; a little rouge would do you no harm.

Ines.—If you love me, pale as I am, why should I seek to please others?

Don Este.—Charming Ines! I should like her, however, to admire my choice.

Ines.—Well! I'll rouge to please you—but must I dress? —I am so awkward in fine clothes.

Don Este.—Don't say so before the Duchess! Go, my angel, get ready—with your figure, one can't be ungraceful.

Ines.—There is no resisting you! Adieu. (Exit.)

Don Este.—(Alone.) The Duchess de Montalvan here! I loved her once, like many others; no further. After all, what the devil is it to me what she says about my marriage? I love Ines—her criticisms can't change me in that respect; they'll have no effect upon me, I am certain. What a moment has she chosen to arrive! Ines is not well to-day—she is pale—her eyes sunk. That malicious Duchess! let her jeer at my marriage—she shall see how I'll receive her pleasantries. She was beautiful formerly; that is to say, five years ago. I came into reputation among the women by her means, and my first duel was fought in her quarrel. I was wounded in the arm, and went to her house bleeding, and proud as a peacock. Well I remember it! She bandaged

the wound herself, and would permit no one else to take care of me. In putting on the dressing she kissed my arm several times. I was then young; and those kisses so inflamed my blood! Never shall I forget that moment. Ah! Don Juan Ramirez, what obligations do I not owe you for the wound you gave me.

Enter Mendo.

Mendo.—Good morrow, Don Esteban; I am happy to find you so gay to-day.

Don Este.—Call me son, if you don't wish to give me pain.

Mendo.—(Embarrassed.) I am come to bid you adieu—I am going—

Don Este.—What! are you about to leave us?

Mendo.—Yes, for Ferrol—a relation—a brother, whom I have not seen these many years.

Don Este.—Ah! a brother newly arrived to you. How happens it you never mentioned his name before?

Mendo.—Because—I—

Don Este.—Something displeases you here, and, therefore, you have determined to quit us.

Mendo.—You are wrong, my dear Baron: but I must go—it is absolutely necessary.

Don Este.—But why?

Mendo.—I have business in Galicia.

Don Este.—You are a perfect mystery! Ah! I divine your secrets. The impertinence of these half-gentlemen has offended you, and you would rather leave the country than expose yourself to similar insults. But wait—stay a little longer—you will be satisfied with the punishment I mean to inflict upon them. They shall be harassed in every possible way. Nearly all the country hereabouts is my property, so that they shall neither fish nor hunt. Should they attempt it—a process instantly. In quality of governor of the province, I will billet soldiers upon them when our troops march toward Portugal. In fine—

Mendo.—Why make yourself unhappy about a mere nothing? Leave them to themselves with their prejudices. For myself, I abandon the field: numbers must carry the day.

Don Este.—Oh, lord—no! Here you remain, now that I know your real motives. Never shall it be said that a Mendoza submitted himself to the caprice of any man living! Here you stay, did all Estremadura march against the château to drive you from it.

Mendo.—Listen, Don Esteban! You know how much I was opposed to this marriage; even had I not been marked with the horrible stain from which the goodness of the king relieved me, I should still have thought equality of condition necessary in the wedded state. Not that I am tainted with those prejudices, or rather every-day opinions, with respect to the citizen and the noble. No: but since, by the will of fate, we are born in a certain class, it is in that class are formed our friendships and connections in life—they are founded on a similitude of tastes, ideas, habits. Where God has placed us, there we should remain. In our family, Heaven has ordered it otherwise; you have connected yourself with a poor man, whose name (notwithstanding his majesty's favor) must sound ill in the ears of a gentleman: to make it respected you will have much to endure. An old man—of himself neither useful nor amusing—who has in truth no business here, ought not to condemn to perpetual slights a noble gentleman to whom he already owes so much.

Don Este.—And I——

Mendo.—No, Esteban; allow me to depart. As to my daughter, in marrying you she has lost my name; she has become a Mendoza—a name that can efface all hereditary stains. Besides, should you be insulted on her account, you are her husband, and have sworn to defend her from the moment she accompanied you to the altar. But I, whilst I remain here, will, like a leper, make your house a desert, and deprive you of all the pleasures and prerogatives to which your rank in the world entitles you.

Don Este.—All this fine speech is useless, Mendo; you must remain. Think you, your society is not more agreeable than that of these half-gentlemen of Estremadura? And shall I, to satisfy their mean pride, separate myself from a friend and a father? No, may they all go to the devil first!

Mendo.—My lord, your kindness overwhelms me: I am so much in the habit of receiving favors from the Mendozas, that I know not how to refuse them. I fear, however, lest you may have cause to repent having retained in your family a peasant, infirm and ignorant.

Don Este.—Ah! my father, that infirmity recalls to my mind all you have done for me! Can I ever repay the obligation?

Mendo.—What I did——

Don Este.—We shall be revenged, be sure of it. Apropos, a beautiful lady, the Duchess Serafine de Montalvan, arrives to-day from Madrid: let us dress ourselves in our Sunday clothes to receive her; it's a folly of mine: but for God's sake quit that brown coat, and put on one more à la mode.

Mendo.—You are wrong not to let me depart.

(Goes out.)

Don Este.—Poh! nonsense! I have done a good action, and will be stronger to resist the seductions of Serafine. Seductions! bless my modesty! how easily (after having made an insignificant conquest) one persuades one's-self that all the women burn with desire to enslave you. Would it not be right, however, to meet the Duchess on the road? No! it might offend Ines—yet, after all, it is nothing more than a polite attention due to every woman. Why should one be less gallant toward a Duchess than a bourgeoisie? I fly to meet her! Who comes here?

Enter Servant.

Servant.—My lord, a lady in a chariot and four has this moment entered the gates. (Exit.)

Don Este.—I will go down immediately. How agitated I am! as if five years had not passed since we met; and five years change woefully a pretty woman. (Exit.)

Enter Ines, rouged and covered with diamonds.

Ines.—With what joy has he gone to meet her! When he received her letter, he appeared so enchanted! he did not read it all to me neither—I don't like showing him how much that hurts me, for, no doubt, he don't do it intentionally. He loves

me, and to be jealous would be so ungrateful. Ah! I am only a plain, awkward village girl! Perhaps the comparison between me and a lady from Madrid, full of wit and grace, will disgust him! But, no! Esteban is so amiable; he'll always love me—I am sure of it. (Seeing the Duchess enter.) How beautiful she is!

Enter Don Esteban, leading the Duchess.

Don Este.—My dear Ines, the Duchess de Montalvan. Madam, permit me to present to you Donna Ines de Mendoza.

Duchess.—Most happy to be acquainted with her.

Ines.—(Confused.) And I too—

Duch.—What shocking roads! I am so fatigued—Ah!

Ines.—Yet you rode in a carriage.

Duch.—Oh! that's nothing—

Don Este.—Madam, won't you do me the honor to be seated? (Aside to Ines.) Ines, what are you about? Sit down.

Duch.—The baroness appears to be in pain. Are you not well, madam?

Ines.—I—Madam—

Don Este.—She is fatigued since yesterday—which is the reason you find her so pale; in general she has more color.

Duch.—With so beautiful a skin as that of the baroness, paleness is not a fault.

Don Este.—(Bowling.) Oh!

Ines.—(Bowling.) Oh!

Duch.—It is more distinguished.

Ines.—Madam is very good: but—

Duch.—Madam the baroness is extremely young! not more than twenty-four or five, I suppose?

Ines.—I shall be five—what am I saying?—twenty, I mean, come Michaelmas.

Duch.—You have not been long in this château?

Don Este.—A very short time! I chose it for my residence as being so near Avis, of which I am titular governor. We

little expected the honor of receiving your grace here. But tell me, madam, what proscription is this of which you speak? what has brought you so far from the capital? Nothing very serious, I hope?

Duch.—Not serious! Learn, Don Esteban, that I am a fugitive in every sense of the word. Here's my history:—I had, you know, some influence at court; the Duke de Lerma consulted me sometimes—even his late majesty honored me with his confidence. All at once comes Olivares, like a shell, I hardly know from whence; supplants Lerma in the affections of young Philip, and destroys all my credit at a blow. There is nothing I detest so much as the intrigues of a court; so I generously offered my friendship to the Count Duke; he refused it with contempt; war declared of course. I tried to turn out the minister by giving the king a confessor of my choosing. Olivares provided him with a mistress—the mistress succeeded—and the king bestowed all his confidence on this minister, Mercury.

Ines.—The Duke of Olivares called Mercury?—what an odd name!

Duch.—Be that as it may. Olivares wished to be revenged. He accused me of being concerned in some Portuguese conspiracy; that unfortunate affair of John de Braganza! "It is you," said he, "who has torn Portugal from his Catholic Majesty!" How foolish! He meant to shut me up in a convent; perhaps even in the tower of Segovia. I had notice of it, and without attending to his decisions, made my escape. With such haste have I traveled, that at this moment my departure from Madrid is hardly known. I shall pass into Portugal, and turn conspirator in good earnest—since it must be so.

Don Este.—How cowardly—send a lady to the tower of Segovia!

Ines.—But—the confessor—

Don Este.—Ines, Donna Serafine would like some refreshment. (Ines goes out.)

Don Este.—(To the Duchess.) I have not asked you whether you made a good journey.

Duch.—Oh, admirable! Apropos—the Governor of Avis is your major?

Don Este.—Yes, madam, he persists in what he wrote me; but there are so few soldiers in the province, that I can send him no assistance. Why do you ask?

Duch.—No reason in the world.

Don Este.—The time has been——

Duch.—Why so embarrassed? have you anything to say to me?

Don Este.—What do you think of my wife?—is she handsome?

Duch.—Very pretty.

Don Este.—She is, unfortunately, extremely timid; it is that makes her appear awkward; you put her out of countenance just now. Was it at Madrid you heard of my marriage?

Duch.—Yes.

Don Este.—Tell me frankly now, what is thought of it?

Duch.—Frankly!

Don Este.—Yes.

Duch.—Well then, it is much criticised (since you are determined to know the truth), though the philosophers of the court applaud it as an excellent example! Songs, sonnets, and jests have been made upon it; in fine, people think you have done a foolish thing. But at Madrid, everything is so quickly forgotten! No one has spoken of it these months past.

Don Este.—And you, madam—dare I demand your opinion?

Duch.—It is rather singular, Don Esteban, that you should address yourself to me, particularly as my advice would be both late and useless.

Don Este.—Madam, pardon me, I did but jest; what is done is done—I am far from repenting of it.

Duch.—Don Esteban, I have lost nothing of the friendship I had for you; it is a long time since we have met, and if either of us has been wrong, I certainly can't charge myself with the fault. Not a word have I heard from you since your departure for the army.

Don Este.—Ah! madam, your just reproaches cover me with shame.

Duch.—For my part, Don Esteban, I have preserved the memory of our old friendship; and in my disgrace, it is from you I have demanded an asylum. Perhaps—

Don Este.—I appreciate as it deserves the flattering mark of confidence.

Duch.—As your friend, your marriage distressed me. As your—But I dare not now pronounce a name, yet more tender, you formerly bestowed upon me. I suffered much—much, Esteban, to see you blinded by a romantic generosity. Pardon the expression in a friend—you will surely repent of it one of these days. I think nothing of the want of birth in your wife—a soul like your's is above vulgar prejudices; nothing even of the repulsive circumstances attached to the father—there, on the contrary, is the romance of the affair. But, alas! I see you joined for life to a peasant girl, without education, without manners! After her first confinement, her beauty disappears; and it is then one feels all the price of education in a wife. I may be deceived, however—I have had but a glimpse of Donna Ines. Prejudice—perhaps jealousy—yes, Esteban, jealousy—I loved, I adored you! Had you married a woman of beauty, and a cultivated mind, one in fine made for you, then (though I should have suffered without doubt to lose a heart I had once possessed, yet the conviction that you were happy in your family, and stood well in public opinion, would have been some consolation), I would have said, he can never be mine, but he has at least found a companion worthy of him. (Weeps.)

Don Este.—Madam! I feel most sensibly the flattering—

Enter Ines, with the *Maitre d'Hôtel*.

Maitre d'Hôtel.—My lord, dinner is served.

Ines.—There is a punchero which you love so much.

Duch.—Ah! (Exeunt.)

End of the First Day.

DAY II. SCENE I.

Apartment in the Château.

Don Esteban—Ines.

Ines.—Love!

Don Esteban.—Hum!

Ines.—You are angry with me?

Don Este.—Angry! why?

Ines.—I said so many foolish things before that beautiful lady: the more I tried the worse it was.

Don Este.—Hush! is she in her room?

Ines.—Yes! How odd it is that before certain persons, one should feel so ill at one's ease. I never saw so imposing a person.

Don Este.—She takes a long siesta.

Ines.—Have you remarked her beautiful hands? I have a great mind to ask her what she does to keep them so white.

Don Este.—(Smiling.) They are not given, Ines, to all the world; one must be born a duchess to have white hands.

Ines.—And still——

Don Este.—It is a long time since she retired to her chamber.

Ines.—My father is in such a taking to-day. Did you observe how he rolled his eyes on looking at the duchess?

Don Este.—With what grace, with what affability, Donna Serafine addressed your father!

Ines.—Yes; and yet he had a gloomy air——

Don Este.—Oh! that's customary with him. She has risen I perceive: go to her, Ines; we can't be too attentive to our guests.

Ines.—(Low.) Above all, to beautiful ladies. (Exit.)

Don Este.—Childish ideas! foolish prejudices! One drives them away, thinks himself delivered from them; and behold

they return as powerful and dangerous as ever! For myself, I have shaken off their yoke—trampled them under my feet. Dearly has my victory cost. I almost repent. No! not repent; but I suffer in having conquered the enemies that I despise: they attack me yet. Since the arrival of the duchess, my wife, the excellent Ines, has lost her beauty in my eyes; her frankness displeases me. Formerly—I am quite ashamed not to be at the very height of the mode in this distant retreat—the god of fashion would chain me to Serafine's car—but no! I will resist this feeble attempt, since I already perceive the snares of the enemy. Besides, have I not conquered in ruder combats? Spain will not easily forget the example I gave. I have, then, a right to reckon on my fortitude and courage. The duchess has assumed her grand airs—well, I'll torment her in my turn. After what has passed between us, I did not expect to be treated like an unfledged youth, just emancipated from college. She pities me, indeed! the coquette! She is handsome as an angel! Ah, conjugal fidelity! happily you are obligatory only on the ladies——

Servant (enters in a fright.)

Servant.—My lord!

Don Este.—What's the matter? why are you frightened?

Serv.—My lord, the Corregidor of Badajos!

Don Este.—The Corregidor?

Serv.—His assistants are with him: he wishes to speak with your lordship.

Don Este.—Very well! let him come up.

Corregidor.—(Coming in.) I have the honor to salute your lordship.

Don Este.—What has procured me the pleasure of this visit?

Cor.—My lord, it is with the most lively regret that I execute an order transmitted to me from court. The Duchess de Montalvan is in this château, preparing to pass into Portugal.

Don Este.—(Much agitated.) How do you know her grace is here?

Cor.—Softly if you please; don't let us be angry. I recognized her carriage in your coach-house.

Don Este.—Admirable judge of heraldry!

Cor.—As good as another, my lord—the duchess' carriage has no coat of arms—so please your Excellency! But the domestics have all confessed——

Don Este.—Your age would promise more good sense than to listen seriously to the prating of a servant.

Cor.—I know how painful it must be to deliver up your guest; but you would be far from wishing to harbor an enemy to his majesty.

Don Este.—Sir, I harbor neither a duchess nor an enemy to his majesty. Be off, and leave me in peace, or I will have you punished for your insolence.

Cor.—No reflections, my lord, if you please: you cannot have me punished, for you are no longer governor of the province; and yet——

Don Este.—What says the insolent——?

Cor.—I should be in despair to offend your excellency by a judicial visit to your château.

Don Este.—By Heaven! were you insolent enough to attempt it, you should soon see what a fellow, ennobled but yesterday, would gain by insulting a grandee of Spain.

Cor.—And you, my lord, ought to learn to treat the ministers of justice with more respect. For the last time, allow me to ask, is the duchess here?

Don Este.—Leave my house! go instantly! or you shall be put out by force!

Cor.—You compel me to it. Halloo! come in.

(Enter armed men.)

Don Este.—(Ringing.) Ah! rascals, is it thus you treat a Mendoza? You, sir, shall pay dearly for your audacity.

(Enter Servants.)

Cor.—Don Esteban de Mendoza, I arrest you in the king's name.
(Touches him with his staff.)

Don Este.—Turn these fellows out! What! has this booby's staff petrified you? I must teach you your duty.

(Draws his sword.) Rascals! this is the way to address you!
Out, miscreants, out! (Drives them out.)

Enter Ines and Duchess.

Ines.—Ah! they are going to kill him! Help! help!

Enter Don Esteban, putting up his sword.

Duchess.—Admirable, my lord Baron! it's impossible to strike harder with the flat of the sword!

Ines.—My dear heart, I am afraid you are wounded!

Don Este.—No.

Duch.—Might one demand of his Lordship what important reasons have obliged him to exercise his arm on the backs of these poor devils in black?

Don Este.—Madam, I must speak to you in private! *Ines*, leave us a moment.

Ines.—Me, my dear heart?

Don Este.—Yes.

Ines.—For a long time?

Don Este.—No, no! do leave us. (Ines goes out.)

Duch.—What mystery! if you were not married, I should be very much frightened.

Don Este.—How painful, madam, to change the charming mood in which I find you! But know, that the Corregidor of Badajoz arrived a moment since to arrest you.

Duch.—Really!

Don Este.—Yes, Donna Serafine! justice has no terrors for me, when the question was to defend those charms which the tower of Segovia threatened to conceal from the world.

Duch.—Oh! thou model of knight-errants! Tristan, Lancelot, Amadis! Receive the thanks of an unfortunate and persecuted lady. Ha, ha, ha!

Don Este.—You are always the same.

Duch.—Alas! I must quit this air of gaiety; it no longer suits me. Dear Esteban, finish your good work: let me have four strong horses; I must be in Portugal to-night.

Don Este.—Everything here is at your orders.

Duch.—Must I leave you then when I am hardly arrived? perhaps never to see you more! Alas! it must be so!

Don Este.—Madam, I——

Duch.—We must lose no time. Have you a trusty, determined person to accompany me, for my companion broke his arm at Caceres.

Don Este.—Donna Serafine, do you know no one here who would glory in assisting you?

Duch.—What do you mean?

Don Este.—Serafine, the time was you would have desired me to accompany you, to protect you in your flight! then why not now?

Duch.—Ah! my dear Esteban.

Don Este.—Speak, Serafine! say you choose me for your chevalier.

Duch.—Impossible, Esteban! already you have exposed yourself on my account to the resentment of a vindictive minister; to accompany me to Portugal in rebellion, would be to declare yourself my accomplice, and shut against you for ever the road to Spain. No, my dear Esteban, I can't ruin you through mere wantonness! Reflect, besides, that, as governor of the district, your actions, even the most indifferent——

Don Este.—Of what importance to me is the anger of Olivares? Oh! that I had greater dangers to brave for your sake! Besides, in accompanying you, I withdraw myself from the pursuit of justice, which I have outraged. Donna Serafine, don't refuse me, I conjure you!

Duch.—Impossible!—you can't abandon your family, your dear Ines. Ah! that name must make you forget the wretched Serafine, and the dangers she encounters. Adieu! Esteban—think sometimes of your old friend.

Don Este.—No, madam, I can't quit you; your position is too dangerous. I could not exist, knowing you exposed to a thousand perils; whilst I, a soldier, seated quietly in my house, confined myself to fruitless wishes for the safety of my guest. My dear Serafine!

(Kneels.)

Duch.—Heavens! am I not sufficiently unhappy?—Must I involve my only friend in my ruin?

Don Este.—Consent, Serafine! I conjure you, by this wound received in your defense.

Duch.—Cruel! what a period you recall to my mind!

Don Este.—You consent!—thank God! I will follow you even to the prisons of Segovia.

Duch.—Ines——

Don Este.—I think but of you—of the dangers which environ you. Ines will remain to calm the storm. And if——

Duch.—Ah! if she knew your design!

Don Este.—I'll find some pretext.

Duch.—Well, I consent. Conduct me as far as——

Don Este.—Name not the place that must separate us.

Duch.—Cruel Olivares! have you victims enough?

Don Este.—Fear nothing on my account; I have powerful friends at court. Your generosity exaggerates the poor service I render you.

Duch.—God grant I may be the only victim!

Don Este.—I am acquainted with the cross-roads: they'll be sharp fellows if they catch us; you could not choose a better guide.

Duch.—Alas! why did I come here!

Don Este.—Thank God for it!

Enter Servant.

Servant.—Letters, my lord.

(Retires.)

Duch.—The minister's seal!

Don Este.—What can he want with me? (Gives the letter to the Duchess after having read it.) You see I am ill looked upon also at court; I am recalled—they order me to return instantly to Madrid.

Duch.—Obey, Esteban, or you are ruined. You see you are compromised already.

Don Este.—A strong reason against running myself into the jaws of the tiger. (Reading the other letter.) This letter

is from our common friend, Don Rodrigo de Yriarde. He tells me I am considered as no stranger to the troubles in Portugal; that it is said, it was not without design I placed myself so near the focus of revolt. Ah, ah! very good, indeed!—yet they are the very persons who sent me here!

Duch.—How miserable I am! I don't know what to advise.

Don Este.—We will think of it on the road. But silence! here comes Ines.

Ines.—(Half-opening the door.) May I come in?

Duch.—Madam, I am displeased with Don Esteban. The news from Madrid which he has communicated to me with such secrecy wasn't worth concealing—above all from you, madam.

Don Este.—My dear Ines, the duchess must leave us this evening; let the horses be put to immediately. I shall accompany her as far as the orange-grove.

Ines.—May I go with you?

Don Este.—No! the dew is falling—you would catch cold.

Ines.—What, madam! you travel by night?—are you not afraid?

Duch.—I am disciplined by misfortune, which has pursued me without ceasing!

Ines.—(To Don Esteban.) Tell me, why did you beat the officers?

Don Este.—Rascals! who dared—a foolish affair—poachers, my love—but you would not understand it.

Ines.—The servants say—

Don Este.—Babblers—who don't know what they say! And you are a foolish child to listen to them—but I have some orders to give—show Donna Serafine the flowers of your own cultivation.

Ines.—Ah! madam, come and see my Arabian jessamines.

Duch.—(To Esteban.) As soon as possible! (Retires.)

SCENE II.

Chamber in the Château.

Mendo.—(Alone.) There is always something impertinent

even in the politeness of the rich. This duchess mocked us, and Don Esteban looked at her oftener than at his wife. Ah! I fear Ines will repent having married a lord.

Enter Ines.

Ines.—She is gone at last, and to tell you the truth, I don't regret her.

Mendo.—Your husband accompanies her?

Ines.—Yes! to the orange-grove—he would not let me go with him on my little white mule. Do you know, I am very uneasy!

Mendo.—Why?

Ines.—He has taken his pistols—yet, there are no robbers in these parts.

Mendo.—It is, perhaps, to encourage the duchess.

Ines.—What dangers are there on the road?

Mendo.—None, I hope.

Ines.—Should the officers seize Donna Serafine—

Mendo.—From Badajos to here is a good distance.

Ines.—She will bring some misfortune upon him—this lady, who wished to force her confessor upon the king! It is true, papa; she told me so herself, in a story of which I understood very little. My God! why did my husband receive her?

Mendo.—He could not do otherwise; wasn't she his friend?

(Knocking at the gate.)

Ines.—I hear a noise at the great gate; can he be returned already?

Enter Corregidor, with Officers armed.

Corregidor.—Health to all present! Here we are, but stronger this time. Justice will be mocked no longer, and they'll be best off who laugh last; aye, aye, we shall soon see who will pay for the broken heads.

Ines.—Who do you want, sir? What is your business here?

Cor.—Nothing but to apprehend, and take into bodily custody, a certain Don Esteban de Mendoza, and Donna Serafine, Duchess de Montalvan—that's all!

Mendo.—What do you mean, sir? that's impossible!

Cor.—Permit me to execute my writ. I know my duty:—above all, no resistance, or I shall put you all to the sword.

Ines.—Sir, the duchess is gone, and my husband too.

Cor.—Pshaw, nonsense! nobody has passed the great gate, so the bird is still in the nest. (To two officers.) You will let no one pass—the rest follow me. (Goes out.)

Ines.—Alas! I knew it—this duchess has ruined him. The holy virgin take pity on him!

Mendo.—Make your mind easy; the rich man always gets out of a scrape.

Ines.—But where is he? when will they restore him to me?

Mendo.—Heaven grant he may soon return!

Ines.—You speak as if you feared the contrary!

Mendo.—Me! I hope—he'll return shortly.

Ines.—There is something in your mind you dare not express;—yes—you know or suspect some great misfortune.

Mendo.—You are deceived, my child. Come, let us go in; we can only pray to God to preserve your husband.

Ines.—Oh! you frighten me so! my mind misgives me—I fear the worst.

Mendo.—Let us retire—we are of no use here.

End of the Second Day.

DAY III. SCENE I.

Elvas—An Inn.

Host, Soldiers, Portuguese, seated drinking at a table.

Host.—(Rising with his glass in his hand.) To John de Braganza, King of Portugal!

All.—To John de Braganza!

Host.—God be thanked! he is a true Portuguese; a good king—and of the right sort—just what we want:—none of your lank-jawed Spaniards pumping our dollars out of us.

Soldier.—If they return, here we are to receive them.

Host.—You don't know the news, gentlemen;—when Don Rodrigo de Saa and Ferdinand Menezes threw Vasconcelhos out of the palace window—what happened, think you?

Citizen.—He broke his neck on the pavement, I suppose.

Host.—A huge phantom appeared to the people, and cried, with a voice of thunder, "Portuguese! to arms! the yoke of Spain is broken!" Who was it, think you?

Sol.—Pretty question! who could it be—if not the king, Don Sebastian?

Host.—Exactly so. Having said these words, the phantom melted into air with a loud clap—as if ten thousand pieces of cannon had been discharged at once. It is true; for I have it from my sister, who was at mass when Vasconcelhos went flying out of the window.

Sol.—What is there so extraordinary in that? Every one knows that King Sebastian is not dead. Listen—One day that I was on guard (it was as black as the devil, and rained a little), I was blowing the match of my piece, when, behold you, a huge figure in white, armed from head to foot, with a crown on his head, passed quite close to me, heaving a deep sigh. I, who fear no man of flesh and blood, when I see a spirit lose all courage: on my knees I went, repeating my litany against spirits.

Host.—I know one, too, which has been often of use to me.

Off.—Ha! who comes here?

Host.—A brave young gentleman—a gallant Portuguese—Don Caesar de Belmont, who commands at the siege of Avis.

Enter Don Caesar (Company rises).

Don Caesar.—Good day, my friends.

Host.—The honor my house—

Don Caesar.—It will soon receive a much greater. I am in expectation of the arrival here of a lady from Castile, who is obliged to fly because she is a friend to Portugal.

Host.—My house is at her service.

Don Caesar.—She will soon be here.

Host.—My lord, I take the liberty to ask your excellency, how speed our affairs?

Don Caesar.—Admirably, master Boniface! The Spanish garrisons are retiring in all haste. John de Braganza is recognized king by general acclamation.

Host.—I am rejoiced at it.

Don Caesar.—The Spanish standard floats on the walls of Avis alone; but, before long, we shall plant that of Portugal in its stead.

Host.—I'll storm it (if necessary), spit in hand! Oh, that I could spit as many Spaniards as I have turkeys!

Enter the Duchess (wearing a Braganza scarf) and Don Esteban.

Duchess.—Hail, land of refuge! hail, Portugal! and long live John de Braganza. Ah! Don Caesar.

Don Caesar.—How happy I am, Donna Serafine, to see you in safety in the kingdom of Portugal.

Duch.—At length I am secure. (She speaks to him aside—Don Esteban remains in the background with an embarrassed air.) Don Caesar, I present you my deliverer, Don Esteban de Mendoza. Don Esteban this is Don Caesar de Belmont. (They coldly salute each other.)

Don Esteban.—You have need of repose, Donna Serafine. I don't know whether this mansion—

Duch.—No; just now I was overcome with fatigue, but the pleasure of being surrounded by my friends, and rescued from the grasp of Olivares, has refreshed me all at once—really I could almost dance!

Don Caesar.—(In a low voice.) His majesty is prepared to give you the most flattering reception at Lisbon.

Duch.—You think so? Do you know, Don Caesar, I have had a fine escape. But for the courage of Signor de Mendoza, I was retaken and shut up in the tower of Segovia.

Don Cæsar.—Good God! why was I not there?

Don Este.—The affair, sir, was not worthy of your presence: (low to the Duchess) turn that person out.

Duch.—Our carriage broke down on the road: whilst it was mending, up comes the Corregidor and his band—pif! pif! pistol-shots—dashing of swords—I was half dead with fear, and didn't open my eyes till Don Esteban announced that the enemy was entirely defeated.

Don Cæsar.—Does he remain here?

Duch.—Yes; we must keep measures with him, till we have effected what you know, about the affair of Avis.

Don Cæsar.—Donna Serafine, you must be in want of rest after such a fatiguing journey: I retire. Signor de Mendoza, if I can be of use to you here, command me.

Don Este.—I thank you, my lord.

Don Cæsar.—(Low to the Duchess.) The major requires a letter. You understand me. (Exit.)

Duch.—Well, Esteban, what's the matter?—you are angry with me.

Don Este.—I?—

Duch.—I! yes, sir, you. What have I done to deserve this ill-temper?

Don Este.—Madam, you jest with such grace—your gaiety is so— (She looks at him tenderly.) Ah! Serafine, don't look so, or I shall never be able to scold you.

Duch.—My dear Esteban, why chide me so? it is I should be angry with you for having followed me into Portugal—but how reproach you with a disobedience which has saved me?

Don Este.—You harass me, Serafine, with your numerous acquaintances. God preserve us! you have friends everywhere, even in Portugal!

Duch.—Well! and what is there astonishing in that? Don Cæsar was engaged like me in the conspiracy. Alas! I have but one regret—to have involved you so deeply.

Don Este.—Ah! Serafine, you know the way to remove my regrets!

Duch.—Signor Mendoza! but what do you mean to do? In your place, compromised as you are, and almost proscribed, I would accept an office in Portugal.

Don Este.—What could they do with me? Besides, I am a Castilian.

Duch.—And am not I a Spaniard? But they have proscribed me, and I am of that country which affords me an asylum.

Don Este.—Let us change the subject.

Duch.—No, I have much to say on that head. The regret I feel at having been the means of your quitting Spain, and exposing you to the resentment of your court, would be much augmented, did I not offer you an indemnity in Portugal.

Don Este.—Is it then for Portugal I have fought? The indemnity which would be——

Duch.—You would not like to serve in the Portuguese ranks at the moment a war is about to commence; but there is some post——

Don Este.—Once more, let us change the subject.

Duch.—But what will become of you? you can't return to Spain without danger.

Don Este.—Would you so soon banish me from your presence?

Duch.—You afflict me!

Don Este.—Is it for John de Braganza to recompense the poor services I have done you? No, Donna Serafine, I am sufficiently paid by the pleasure I feel in seeing you out of danger.

Duch.—You are no longer a Spaniard—why not become a Portuguese? Listen—I can promise you a post which, without obliging you to bear arms against Spain, will procure you the favor of John de Braganza.

Don Este.—Strange obstinacy!

Duch.—You may even render a service to your countrymen; for example: the castle of Avis is closely besieged—tomorrow Don Caesar attacks it by storm; but, out of consideration for me, he will permit the garrison to retire: write

to the commandant; you are governor of Avis, and his superior—you ought to have some influence over him—tell him to cease a useless defense, and that you authorize him to capitulate.

Don Este.—Are you aware of what you wish me to do?

Duch.—Nothing but what is very simple. You are persuaded, you tell me, that the castle is not tenable—spare, then, the blood of your countrymen.

Don Este.—But the honor of a Spaniard!—

Duch.—Oh! honor! honor! there's your theme! That word has caused rivers of blood to flow. But whether Don Cæsar storm the castle or not, what is that to me? I promise to bestow this scarf upon him who shall first plant the standard of Portugal on the walls of Avis—how happy I shall be if Don Cæsar be the victor.

Don Este.—Don Cæsar! always Don Cæsar! that's your theme, Serafine. Ever since we have been in Portugal, you speak only of Don Cæsar!

Duch.—And why should I not speak of him?

Don Este.—I don't mean to vaunt the services I have done you, but tell me, where will you find a heart that loves you like mine?

Duch.—You forget—

Don Este.—Let me forget all at your feet! Serafine, I adore you! why will you drive me to despair by your levity?

Duch.—(Low.) Duty must prevail over love—you forget, my lord, your faith is pledged.

Don Este.—No, cruel! I do not forget it—my conscience has not enough reproached me! Your taunts, your sarcasms, were wanting to complete my misery! Yes, I have quitted all for you; sacrificed country—wife—honor: but you—you, Serafine, who have made me the most contemptible of men—you repulse me with disdain, and Don Cæsar's affection, rather than mine, appears to have gained your heart!

Duch.—Unjust! Can you accuse me?—have I been wanting to my plighted faith? Remember the orange-grove at Aranjuez—have you not a thousand times sworn eternal love to me? You depart—a few letters, cold and polite, are the

only consolation I receive from you; after a while they cease entirely. At length the last blow is dealt—you are married, Esteban—and to whom?—what a rival! just heaven! Behold your fidelity!—look how you observed your oaths! Go, perjured man! leave me to lament over my past weakness!

Don Este.—Serafine, I have never ceased to love you. Yes, I swear it! I have quitted Ines to be no longer separated from you—to live your slave. Will you abandon me? Ah! no; you will yet open your arms to him who adores you!

Duch.—Oh, Esteban!

Don Este.—I am yours for ever! (Embracing her.)

Duch.—If you know how to despise public opinion, we will exist but for each other.

Don Este.—For ever?

Duch.—Yes, for ever! Oh, love, we shall live happy, far from Spanish tyrants, near our august and beloved monarch. Long live John de Braganza!

Don Este.—Long live John de Braganza!

Duch.—Now we are Portuguese.

(She invests him with the Braganza scarf.)

Don Este.—I must spread a report of my death—change my name; then in retirement, far from the tumult of courts, we shall live happy in each other's arms! But, should poor Ines—

Duch.—(Embracing him.) Idol of my heart!—tell me, will you write to the commandant of Avis?

Don Este.—I conjure you, Serafine, not to exact it of me.

Duch.—No; but I entreat—I—

Don Este.—You require it?—yes, I'll sacrifice all to you.

Duch.—A kiss for the trouble.

Don Este.—But what to say? I can't write—

Duch.—Tell him there are no hopes of assistance from Spain—Is that true? Yes, or no?

Don Este.—Yes;—but—there, write yourself—I will sign it: are you satisfied?

Duch.—(Writing.) My only love! Yes, now I believe in your affection.
(She rings; enter Pedro.)

Duch.—Let this letter be despatched instantly to the commandant of Avis. A cornet of the volunteers of Bera is below; he will take charge of it.

Pedro.—My lord, are you for the new fashion of wearing a Braganza scarf?

Don Este.—Well?

Pedro.—Because, in that case, I'll demand my discharge. I have no desire to turn Portuguese—Spaniard I am born, and Spaniard I'll die.

Don Este.—Ah! dear Serafine, what a sacrifice I make you!

Duch.—So you are disconcerted because a valet desires his discharge! Good fellow, there's money to drink my health—return home, and may Our Lady protect you. (Aside to him.) Should anyone ask what is become of Signor de Mendoza, say he's dead—killed in a duel—you understand?

Pedro.—Must I tell it to everybody? even to Madam?

Duch.—To everybody. Accept this ring—give it to your wife, if you have one; but first give the letter to the officer below. (Pedro goes out.) My Esteban, observe the sun setting in that orange-grove—it reminds me of that sweet evening at Aranjuez.

Don Este.—Ah! why did I quit you? (Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

Château de Mendoza.

Ines—*Mendo.*

Mendo.—He is forced to conceal himself, on account of this unpleasant affair; in some time, when justice is appeased, he'll return.

Ines.—But why not write? I might have heard from him three times over.

Mendo.—Hum!

Ines.—I see but too plainly, you don't tell me what you think. Esteban is dead—or unfaithful—God grant it may be the last!

Mendo.—(Aside). Yes, for I would revenge you.

Ines.—What do you say, father?

Mendo.—I hope he's alive, and loves you still—but more than one reason——

Ines.—Holy Virgin! isn't that Pedro I see?

Enter Pedro.

Pedro.—Madam, your most humble servant.

Ines.—Pedro, what have you done with my husband? Speak!

Pedro.—Alas! madam——

Ines.—He is dead?

Pedro.—The Lord have mercy upon him, and forgive him his sins!

Ines.—She has killed him! (Faints.)

Mendo.—Rascal! you have murdered my daughter!

Pedro.—Madam! madam! take courage, don't believe a word of it—Signor de Mendoza is not dead.

Ines.—Mendoza!

Pedro.—He is alive and well.

Ines.—Thank God! I shall see him then?

Pedro.—I don't know that.

Ines.—Pedro, tell me all—conceal nothing!

Pedro.—You wish to know the truth? Well, then, he is at Elvas with the duchess he calls his dear Serafine—I saw him with the Portuguese scarf. Besides, there are bad reports about him. On seeing that I demanded my discharge, the duchess gave me money to say he was dead, and your husband appeared to consent. Would the ducats had melted in my hand, and burned me to the bone! My lying has almost killed my dear mistress.

Ines.—I shall never recover it!

Mendo.—What I foresaw has happened—Ines!

Ines.—Father!

Mendo.—Have you the clothes you wore at Monclar?

Ines.—Yes, father!

Mendo.—Resume them instantly—abandon all the perjured wretch has given you—keep nothing! We must remain no longer under his roof—I shall take you to Badajos; the abbess of the Ursulines will give you an asylum.

Ines.—Give me your hand—I am very weak.

Mendo.—Come—support yourself on my arm—I am firm—come!
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.

Inn at Elvas.

Don Esteban—Duchess.

Duchess.—Why so sad, my love? your Serafine—can she not divert you from your melancholy?

Don Esteban.—With a conscience like mine, one can never be gay.

Duch.—Take your gun, and amuse yourself a little.

Don Este.—Has the commandant of Avis entered Spain?

Duch.—I imagine so.

Don Este.—Has the capitulation been religiously observed?

Duch.—Without doubt.

Don Este.—I am glad of it—Serafine, let us quit Elvas. The recollections attached to this house kill me—would to Heaven we were together in the deserts of America!

Duch.—To me, Elvas recalls but scenes of love. With your permission, however, in place of the deserts of America, we would do well to go to Lisbon.

Don Este.—We shall think of it. I am going to ride—will you accompany me?

Duch.—No, I am fatigued—I'll lie down a little.

Don Este.—Where is—Don Cæsar?

Duch.—Incorrigible jealousy!—he is at Avis, no doubt!

Don Este.—Suspect you, Serafine? you, who have given me so many proofs of affection? I'll take a gallop; when the wind whistles about my ears, and stuns me with its roar, it is then I am most at ease—adieu! (Exit.)

Duch.—Adieu, my love—Poor fool!—a contemptible fellow!—without a character! At first, I thought to make something of him; but he is too narrow-minded ever to become the companion of Serafine. Sometimes he excites my pity; but, to interest myself about so weak a creature would destroy my noble project. Olivares! you drove me from Madrid, but I shall enter Lisbon in triumph! Now may I give the reins to my ambition! I see no bounds to my rising power. (Clock strikes.) So late! he ought to be here! Ah! he comes.

Don Cæsar enters.

Duch.—Enter, Cæsar—Pompey is away!

Don Cæsar.—My queen, admire my punctuality! I arrive from Avis at a gallop, and, without taking time to breathe, hasten to bear you off.

Duch.—Our man is greatly alarmed for the garrison of Avis.

Don Cæsar.—By Heaven! he has reason. I am no gentleman if the peasants of Alentego and Bera let a man of them enter Spain!

Duch.—Oh! shocking, Don Cæsar! Hold this vell—are the horses harnessed?

Don Cæsar.—Yes, my charming Serafine.

Duch.—Come to my room, and assist in disguising me.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE IV.

Serafine's Chamber at Elvas.

Don Esteban.—(Alone.) Fatigue of body gives no repose to the mind. She is forever before my eyes—ah! what she must suffer at this moment! Wretched creature! how had

she offended me? (Calls.) Serafine! Donna Serafine! What can this mean? where can she be? (Sees a letter.) Ha! (Reads.) "For the Baron de Mendoza"—it is her writing. "Dear Esteban, I am in despair to quit you; but it is absolutely necessary that I should go to Lisbon. As it appears to me that you don't much like Portugal, I advise you to return to your excellent wife, who must be in great distress about you—be happy with her. Adieu; don't be in pain on my account—Don Cæsar——" Ha! I deserve it—yes, I deserve it! I quitted an angel, to throw myself into the arms of a demon. Revenge! No, my courage is gone. What will become of me?—how shall I dare present myself before old Mendo? Ines' arms would be open to me;—but Mendo—if Pedro—he must have told him. Oh, monster that I am! I have killed her, perhaps! Ines! Ines! Is it you or your corpse awaits me at Mendoza? I can no longer endure this uncertainty: it must end! I'll return to Mendoza, were I to sacrifice my life. (Enter Pedro.) Ah! Pedro, what news?

Pedro.—My lord, I am come back to you;—madam's grief was so great, that—I couldn't lie—I confessed all.

Don Este.—Well?

Pedro.—They have quitted Mendoza; her father has taken her to the convent of the Ursulines at Badajoz.

Don Este.—I fly thither. Pedro, did they send you to me?

Pedro.—My lord, madam gave me this note for you, unknown to her father.

Don Este.—(Reading it.) Not a reproach! Oh, angel of heaven! How could I deceive you? Quick, Pedro! Horses! We must be to-night at Badajoz.

Pedro.—I doubt if we can, my lord; we must take the cross-roads.

Don Este.—Why?

Pedro.—All the country is up in arms: the garrison of Avis has been massacred by the insurgent peasantry; and every Spaniard who falls into their hands is put to death instantly.

Don Este.—What, another blow! No matter, Pedro—we must——If I fall, tell her I died repentant.

Pedro.—Ah! my lord, she's an angel! She never ceased excusing you to her father.

Don Este.—Let us hasten, Pedro. The major, Don Gregorio,—is he not saved?

Pedro.—No, my lord, they have hanged him.

Don Este.—Another murder on my conscience!

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V.

A Parlor in the Convent of the Ursulines.

Mendo, Ines, the Superior.

Mendo.—Adieu, Ines! we shall meet again.

Ines.—Adieu, father! I have not long to live; the blow was too severe. Should he forget her—and return to his Ines! Alas! time is short with me—it will not await his return. Tell him I forgive him, and died imploring Heaven for his pardon. Adieu, father!

Mendo.—Adieu, my dear daughter! (*Ines enters the interior of the Convent.*) Now do I devote myself, body and soul, to vengeance. Thank Heaven, my left hand yet remains.

Enter Don Esteban, pale and in disorder.

Don Esteban.—Ines! Ines! my best beloved!

Mendo.—Respect this holy place.

Don Esteban.—Ines! Ines!

Ines.—(*Behind the scenes.*) 'Tis he! 'tis he!—he has returned to me! (*Enters, rushing toward Don Esteban.*) You love me then still! Oh! I am happy! (*Swoons.*)

Superior.—The chair! put her in the chair! let her smell these salts—I'll go for water. (*Exit.*)

Don Este.—My dearest Ines! if my tenderest affection could repair my crime—Speak to me, for God's sake!

Enter Superior, with water.

Superior.—Take a draught of water, madam.

Ines.—Esteban!—father!—give me each of you your hand.
(She endeavors to join them; Mendo withdrawing his.)
Esteban, embrace me!—adieu! (Dies.)

Superior.—She is dead!

Mendo.—Signor de Mendoza, what say you to this spectacle?—look upon your work. This mutilated arm—does it suggest nothing to your mind?—no feeling of gratitude? Gratitude! oh yes! I invoke the corpse of my daughter to witness it! As yet, I am guiltless of blood; but this day do I constitute myself your judge and your executioner. The Lord have mercy upon your soul.

(Fires upon Don Esteban.)

Superior.—Help! help! murder! shut the gates.

Don Este.—Let him escape! (Dies on Ines' bosom.)

Mendo.—I'll not stir; inasmuch as the comedy is finished. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, thus ends the drama of Ines Mendo; or, The Triumph of Prejudice.

LOVERS' VOWS;
OR,
THE NATURAL SON.
BY
AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARON WILDENHAIN, a Colonel out of Service.

COUNT VON DER MULDE.

*PASTOR of the Parish in which the Baron's Estate
lies.*

CHRISTIAN, the Baron's Butler.

FREDERICK, a young Soldier.

LANDLORD.

FARMER.

LABORER.

IEW.

GAMEKEEPER.

COTTAGER.

AMELIA, the Baron's Daughter.

WILHELMINA.

COTTAGER'S WIFE.

COUNTRY GIRL.

Servants and Gamekeepers.

PRELUDE.

Measured with reference to dramatic endowment, to fertility of resource, almost with reference to volume of production, August F. F. von Kotzebue might fitly be termed the Lope de Vega of the German drama. Nor was his life inferior in romantic interest and situations to one of his plays, ending with a fifth act quite as tragic as the dénouement of a tragedy from his own pen; for on March 23, 1819, a dagger was plunged into his heart, the assassin exclaiming: "Here, thou betrayer of the Fatherland."

Das Kind der Liebe, or *Lovers' Vows*, is one of the most readable of the many Kotzebue dramas. It has been translated into a number of languages, and there is a passage in the author's autobiography showing the great popularity it enjoyed upon the Russian stage. As a probationary prelude to the supposed happiness of the frail personages of this drama, the author has plunged Wilhelmina in bitterest poverty and woe, which she receives as a contrite penitent atoning for her sins. The Baron Wildenhain, living in power and splendor, is still more rigorously visited by remorse, and in the reproaches uttered by his outcast son—become by a father's disregard of his necessities a culprit subject to death by the law—the Baron's guilt has exemplary chastisement. The grand moral of this play is to set forth the miserable consequences which arise from the neg-

lect, and to enforce the watchful care, of illegitimate offspring; and surely, as the pulpit has not had eloquence—as Mrs. Inchbald remarks—to eradicate the crime of seduction, the stage may be allowed an humble endeavor to prevent its most fatal effects.

ACT I.

SCENE—A road near a town. The last houses of a small village are visible.

Enter Landlord from a public house, drawing Wilhelmina after him.

Landlord.—There's no longer any room for you, I tell you. We have a wake to-day in our village, and all the country people, as they pass, will come into my house with their wives and children; so I must have every corner at liberty.

Wilhelmina.—Can you thrust a poor sick woman out of doors?

Land.—I don't thrust you.

Wil.—Your cruelty will break my heart.

Land.—It will not come to that.

Wil.—I have spent my last penny with you.

Land.—That is the very reason why I send you away. Where can you procure any more?

Wil.—I can work.

Land.—Why, you can scarcely move your hand.

Wil.—My strength will return.

Land.—When that is the case, you may return too.

Wil.—Where shall I remain in the meantime?

Land.—It is fine weather. You may remain anywhere.

Wil.—Who will clothe me, when this my only wretched garment is drenched with dew and rain?

Land.—He who clothes the lilies of the field.

Wil.—Who will bestow on me a morsel of bread to allay my hunger?

Land.—He who feeds the fowls of the air.

Wil.—Cruel man! you know I have not tasted anything since yesterday morning.

Land.—Sick people eat little: it is not wholesome to overload their stomachs.

Wil.—I will pay honestly for everything I have.

Land.—By what means? These are hard times.

Wil.—My fate is hard, too.

Land.—I'll tell you what. This is the high-road, and it is much frequented. Ask some compassionate soul to bestow a trifle on you.

Wil.—I beg! No; rather will I starve.

Land.—Mercy on us! What a fine lady! Many an honest mother's child has begged before now, let me tell you. Try, try. Custom makes everything easy. (Wilhelmina has seated herself upon a stone under a tree.) For instance, here comes somebody. I'll teach you how to begin.

Enter a fat Farmer, walking very leisurely.

Good morning to you, sir; good morning to you! There's a poor sick woman sitting under yon tree. Will you please to bestow a trifle on her?

Farmer.—Is she not ashamed of herself? She is still young, and can work.

Land.—She has had a fever.

Far.—Aye, one must work hard nowadays, one must toil, from morn to night, for money is scarce.

Land.—Pay for her breakfast, will you, sir? She is hungry.

Far.—(As he passes.) We have had a bad harvest this year, and the distemper has killed my best cattle. (Exit.)

Land.—The miser! That fellow is always brooding over his dollars. By the way, now, that I am talking of brooding, I remember my old hen ought to hatch her eggs to-day: I must look after her directly. (Exit into the house.)

Wilhelmina is left alone. Her dress betrays extreme poverty. Her countenance bears the marks of sickness and anxiety, yet the remains of former beauty are still visible.

Will.—Oh, God! thou know'st I never was thus unfeeling, while I still possessed anything. Oh, thou, whose guardian power has hitherto protected me from dark despair, accept my thanks. Oh that I could but work again! This fever has completely deprived me of my strength. Alas! if my Frederick knew that his mother was fallen a victim to penury—is he still alive? Or does some heap of earth already cover him. Thou author of my sufferings, I will not curse thee. God grant thee prosperity and peace, if such blessings ever be bestowed upon the seducer of innocence. Should chance conduct thee hither; shouldst thou, amidst these rags, and in this woe-worn form, recognize thy former blooming Wilhelmina, what, what would be thy sensations! Alas! I am hungry. Oh that I had but a morsel of bread! Well, I will endeavor to be patient. I shall surely not be allowed to starve on the highway.

Enter a country girl, carrying eggs and milk to market. She is passing nimbly on, and sees Wilhelmina.

Girl.—God bless you, good woman!

Will.—I thank you sincerely. Dearest girl, can you bestow a piece of bread on a poor woman?

Girl.—(Stopping with a look of compassion.) Bread! No; I can't, indeed, for I have none. Are you hungry?

Will.—Alas! yes.

Girl.—Good Heavens! I have eat all my bread for breakfast, and I have no money. I am going to the town; and when I have sold my milk and eggs, I'll bring you a dreyer. But—you will still be hungry till I return. Will you drink some of my milk?

Will.—Yes, my good child.

Girl.—There, then! Take as much as you like. (Holds the pail to her lips with great kindness.) Won't you have a little more? Drink! drink! You are very welcome.

Will.—Heaven reward you for your charity! You have preserved me.

Grl.—I am glad to hear it. (Nods kindly to her.) Good day! God bless you! (Exit singing.)

Wil.—(Looking after her.) Such formerly was I—as happy, as contented, as susceptible of good impressions.

Enter a gamekeeper, with a gun and a brace of pointers.

Wil.—I wish you good diversion, honest man.

Gamekeeper.—(As he passes.) Damnation! The first thing I meet on my road is an old woman! I would as soon have seen a magpie, or the devil. I'm sure to have had sport to-day—perhaps not a shot. Go to hades, you old harridan!

(Exit.)

Wil.—That man conceals the hardness of his heart behind the veil of superstition. Here comes some one else—a Jew! If I could beg, I would implore his aid.

Enter a Jew, who, as he passes, espies Wilhelmina, stops, and surveys her for a moment.

Wil.—Heaven bless you!

Jew.—I thank you, poor woman. You look ill.

Wil.—I have had a fever.

Jew.—(Hastily puts his hand into his pocket, draws out a small purse, and gives her some money.) There! I can spare no more, for I have but little myself. (Exit.)

Wil.—(Calling after him with great emotion.) A thousand thanks!—a thousand thanks! Was I wrong in my conjecture? The heart and the creed have no concern with each other.

Enter Frederick, with his knapsack on his back. He walks cheerfully on, and is humming a tune; but at the sight of the sign over the door of the public house, stops.

Frederick.—Hem! I'll quench my thirst here, I think. This hot weather makes me feel quite parched. But let me consult my pocket in the first place. (Draws out a little money and counts it.) I think I have as much as will pay for my breakfast and dinner; and at night, please God, I shall have reached home.—Holla! landlord!—(Espies Wilhelmina.) But

what do I see yonder? A poor sick woman, who appears to be quite exhausted. She does not beg, but her countenance claims assistance. Should we never be charitable till we are asked, and reminded that we ought to be so? Shame on it! No. I must wait till noon before I drink. If I do a good action I shall not feel either hungry or thirsty.—There!—(Goes toward her in order to give her the money, which he already held in his hand to pay for his liquor.)

Wil.—(Surveying him minutely, utters a loud shriek.) Frederick!

Fred.—(Starts, gazes intently on her; casts away his money, knapsack, hat, stick, in short, everything which encumbers him, and rushes into her arms.) Mother! (Both are speechless. Frederick first recovers.) Mother! For God's sake do I find you in this wretched state? Mother! What means this? Speak!

Wil.—(Trembling.) I cannot—speak—dear son—dear Frederick—the bliss—the transport—

Fred.—Compose yourself—dear, good mother! (She rests her head on his breast.) Compose yourself. How you tremble! You are fainting.

Wil.—I am so weak—I feel so ill—my head is so giddy—all yesterday I had nothing to eat.

Fred.—(Springing up with looks of horror, and hiding his face with both hands.) Almighty God! (Runs to his knapsack, tears it open and draws out a piece of bread.) Here is some bread! (Collects the money, which he had thrown away, and adds to it what he has in his pocket.) Here is my little stock of money. I'll sell my coat—my cloak—my arms. Oh, mother, mother!—Holla, there! landlord! (Knocks violently at the door of the public house.)

Land.—(Looking out of a window.) What now?

Fred.—A bottle of wine! Directly! Directly!

Land.—A bottle of wine!

Fred.—Yes, I tell you.

Land.—For whom, pray?

Fred.—For me!—Zounds!—Be quick.

Land.—Well—but, Mr. Soldier, can you pay for it?

Fred.—Here is the money. Make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

Land.—Patience! Patience! (Shuts the window.)

Fred.—(To his mother.) Fasted all day! And I had plenty! Last night I had meat and wine to supper, while my mother was fasting. Oh, God! oh, God! how is all my joy embittered!

Wil.—Peace, my dear Frederick. I see you again—I am well again. I have been very ill—and had no hopes of ever beholding you once more on earth.

Fred.—Ill! And I was not with you! Now I'll never leave you again. See! I am grown tall and stout. I can work for you.

Enter Landlord with a bottle and glass.

Landlord.—Here's wine for you! A precious vintage, I promise you. Such a glass is not to be tasted every day.

Fred.—Give me it directly. What is the price of the trash?

Land.—Trash! Such a capital article as that, trash! The real juice of the grape, I promise you. I sell none of your common vintner's balderdash. I have another precious wine in my cellar, which you shall taste. Such a fine rich, oily flavor! (Frederick impatiently attempts to take the bottle and glass from him.) Hold! hold! The money, first, if you please. This bottle costs half a guilder.

Fred.—(Giving him all his money.) There! There! (Pours out a glass and gives it to his mother, who drinks, and eats a little bread with it.)

Land.—(Counting the money.) There ought to be another dreyer. But, however, one must have compassion. As it is intended for the poor old woman, I'll not insist upon the dreyer. But take care you don't break the bottle or glass. (Exit.)

Wil.—I thank you, dear Frederick. Wine from a son's hands instills new life.

Fred.—Don't talk too much, mother, till you have recovered your strength.

Wil.—Tell me how you have fared during the last five years.

Fred.—I have met with good and bad luck mixed together. One day my pocket was full—the next I was worth nothing.

Wil.—It is long since you wrote to me.

Fred.—Why, my dear mother, postage is one of the severest taxes on a soldier. Consider how far we were quartered from you—a letter would almost have cost me half a year's pay; and I must have something to subsist on. I always consoled myself with the idea that my mother was in good health, and that it would make no great difference if I deferred my letter for another week or two. Thus one week passed after another. Forgive me, mother.

Wil.—When anxiety is at an end, it is easy to forgive. Have you, then, obtained your discharge?

Fred.—No, not yet. I have only procured leave of absence for a couple of months. This I did for certain reasons; but as you want me, I will remain with you.

Wil.—That is not necessary, my dear Frederick. Your visit will enliven me, and restore me to health. I shall then be again strong enough to work; and you can return to your regiment; for I would not interfere with your fortune. But you said you had obtained leave of absence for certain reasons. May I know those reasons?

Fred.—You shall know all, mother. When I left you, five years since, you had provided me plentifully with clothes, linen and money; but one trifle you had forgotten—the certificate of my birth. I was then a wild, careless lad, but fifteen years of age, and thought little of the matter. This has since occasioned me much uneasiness. Often, when I have been heartily tired of a soldier's restless life, I have wished to obtain my discharge, and learn some reputable trade. But whenever I applied to any tradesman, his first question always was, "Where is the certificate of your birth?" This silenced me. I was vexed, and remained a soldier; for in that profession it is only asked whether the heart be in the right place, and a certificate of birth is as little regarded as the diploma of nobility. The circumstance, however, led me into many a quarrel. My comrades were become acquainted with it; and if any of them owed me a grudge, or were rather drunk, they would sneer at me, and torment me with sarcastic remarks. Once or twice I had

been so far exasperated as to fight, the consequence of which was that I was placed under arrest, and severely reprimanded. At length, my commanding officer, on another of these quarrels taking place, about five weeks ago, summoned me to attend him in his own room. Oh, mother! he is a noble, generous man! "Boetcher," said he to me, "I am sorry to hear that you are constantly incurring punishment by being engaged in quarrels; for in other respects I am satisfied with your attention to the service, and have a good opinion of you. The sergeant has told me the cause of all this. I, therefore, advise you to write home for the certificate of your birth; or, if you rather choose to fetch it yourself, I will grant you leave of absence for a couple of months." Oh, mother! your form floated before my eyes while he addressed me. I kissed his hand, and stammered out my thanks. He then put a dollar into my hand. "Go, my lad," said he, "I wish you a good journey. Don't fail to return at the appointed time."—Well, mother, here I am, as you see; and now you know all that has happened.

WIL.—(Who has listened to him with great confusion and embarrassment.) You are come, therefore, dear Frederick, for the certificate of your birth?

Fred.—Yes.

WIL.—Oh, Heavens!

Fred.—What is the matter? (Wilhelmina bursts into a flood of tears.) For God's sake, what is the matter?

WIL.—You can have no certificate of your birth.

Fred.—Can have none?

WIL.—You are a natural son.

Fred.—Indeed!—and who is my father?

WIL.—Alas! the wildness of your look destroys me.

Fred.—(Recollecting himself, in a gentle and affectionate tone.) No, dear mother, I am still your son; but tell me, who is my father?

WIL.—When you left me five years since, you were still too young to be entrusted with such a secret. You have now reached an age at which you have a claim upon my confidence. You are become a man, and a good man. My sweet maternal hopes are quite fulfilled. I have often heard how consoling,

how reviving to a sufferer was the communication of her sorrows. The tears which those sorrows draw from another's eyes alleviate the pangs which the sufferer seemed forever destined to endure. Thanks, thanks to benignant Heaven, the hour at last is come, when I may, for the first time, feel this consolatory sensation. My son is my confidant—be he also my judge. Of a rigid judge I must be afraid; but my son will not be rigid.

Fred.—Proceed, good mother. Relieve your heart.

Wil.—Yes, dear Frederick, I will tell you all—yet shame and confusion bind my tongue. You must not look at me during my recital.

Fred.—Do I not know my mother's heart? Cursed be the thought which condemns you for a weakness: of a crime you are incapable.

Wil.—Yonder village, whose church you at a distance see towering above the trees, is my native place. In that church I was baptized. In that church I was instructed in our faith. My parents were worthy, pious cottagers. They were poor, but strictly honest. When I was fourteen years of age, the lady of the manor one day saw me. She was pleased with me, took me with her to the castle, and felt a pleasure in forming my rude talents. She put good books into my hands. I read; I learned French and music. My conceptions and capacity developed themselves. But at the same time my vanity—yes, under the mask of reserve I became ridiculously vain. I was seventeen years old when the son of my benefactress, who was an officer in the Saxon service, obtained leave to visit his relations. I had never before seen him. He was a handsome and engaging young man. He talked to me of love and marriage. He was the first who had done homage to my charms. Do not look at me, dear Frederick, or I cannot proceed. (Frederick casts down his eyes, and presses her hand to his heart.) I was a credulous being, and was easily robbed of my innocence. The hypocrite feigned the most ardent affection—promised to marry me at the death of his aged mother—vowed fidelity and constancy—alas!—and I forgot my pious parents—the precepts of our good old pastor—the kindness of my benefactress—I became pregnant. We both awoke from the sweet delirium, and beheld

with horror the prospect of futurity. I had ventured everything. He feared the anger of his mother, who was a good woman, but inexorably strict and rigid. How kindly did he implore me, how impressively did he conjure me, not to betray him! How affectionately, how tenderly, did he promise to reward me at a future period for all that I endured on his account! He succeeded; I pledged to him my word that I would be silent, that I would bury the name of my seducer, as well as his much-loved form in my heart; that for his sake I would encounter every misfortune which awaited me—for, oh, how dearly did I love him! Much, much, indeed, I have encountered. He departed, satisfied with my promise. The time of my delivery approached, and I found it impossible any longer to conceal my situation. Alas! I was harshly treated when I persisted in my determination not to confess who was the father of my child. I was driven from the castle with every mark of disgrace; and, when I reached the door of my afflicted parents, I was again refused admittance. My father would have exceeded all bounds; but my mother tore him hastily away at the moment he was about to curse me. She returned, threw me a crooked dollar, which she wore around her neck, and wept. Since that day I have never seen her. The dollar I have still in my possession. (Produces it.) Rather would I have starved than have parted with it. (Gazes at it, kisses it and puts it again into her bosom.) Without a home, without money, without friends, I wandered a whole night through open fields. I once came near the stream where the mill stands, and almost was I tempted to throw myself under the wheels of the mill, and thus put an end to my miserable existence. But suddenly our pastor's venerable form again appeared to me. I started back; and while I thought I saw him, all his instructions occurred to me, and roused my confidence. As soon as the morning dawned I went to his house. He received me with kindness, and did not reproach me. "What is done," said he, "cannot be undone. God is merciful to the penitent. Reform, my daughter, and all may yet be well. You must not remain in the village, for that will only be a mortification to you, and likewise a scandal to my parish. But"—here he put a piece of gold into my hand, and delivered to me a letter, which he had written for me—"go to the town,

my daughter, and seek the honest old widow to whom this letter is addressed. With her you may remain in safety, and she will teach you how to earn an honest livelihood." With these words he laid his hand upon my head, gave me his blessing and promised to appease my father's resentment. Oh! I felt newly born; and on my way to the town I reconciled myself with the Almighty by solemnly vowing never again to swerve from the path of virtue. I have kept my vow. Now look at me again, Frederick. (Frederick clasps her with speechless emotion in his arms. A pause.) Your birth was to me the cause of much joy, and of much sorrow. I twice wrote to your father—but—Heaven knows whether he received my letters; I have never received any answer to them.

Fred.—(Violently.) Never any answer!

Wil.—Check your indignation, my son. It was in time of war, and the regiment to which he belonged was in the field. There was a commotion through the whole empire; for the troops of three powers were alternately pursuing each other. How easily, therefore, might my letters be lost! No, I am certain he never received them; for he was not a villain. After that time, I did not choose to trouble him, from a sensation—perhaps of pride. I thought, if he had not forgotten me, he would come in search of me, and would easily learn from the pastor where I was to be found—but he did not come; and some years after, I even heard—(with a sigh)—that he was married. I then bade farewell to my last hope. In silent retirement I earned my subsistence by manual labor, and by instructing a few children in what I myself had learned at the castle. You, dear Frederick, were my only comfort; and on your education I bestowed everything which was not absolutely necessary for my own subsistence. My diligence was not ill rewarded, for you were a good boy; but the wildness of your youthful ardor, your bent toward a soldier's life, and your resolution to seek your fortune in the wide world, caused me much uneasiness. At last I thought it must be as God ordained; and if it were your destination I ought not to prevent it, even if the parting were to break my heart. Five years ago, therefore, I allowed you to go, and gave you as much as I could spare—perhaps more than I could spare; for I was in

good health, and then we are not apt to anticipate illness. Had this continued, I could have earned more than I wanted; I should have been a rich woman in my situation, and could have made my son an annual Christmas present. But I was attacked by a lingering and consuming illness. My earnings were at an end, and my little savings were scarcely sufficient to pay my physician and my nurse. A few days since, therefore, I was obliged to leave my little hut, being no longer able to discharge the rent, and was compelled to wander on the highway with this stick, this sack and these rags, soliciting a morsel of bread from the charity of those who happened to pass.

Fred.—Had your Frederick suspected this, how bitter would have been to him every morsel which he ate, and every drop which he drank! Well, Heaven be praised that I have found you alive at my return; for now I will remain with you forever. I will send information of this to my commanding officer, and he may take it in what light he pleases; for, if he even call it desertion, I will not again forsake my mother. Alas! I have unfortunately learned no art, no trade; but I have a couple of stout, nervous arms, with which I can guide the plough or wield the flail. I'll hire myself to some farmer as a day-laborer, and at night write for some lawyer.

Wil.—(Clasps him with emotion in her arms.) What princess can offer me anything in exchange for such a blissful moment?

Fred.—One thing I had forgotten, mother. What was my father's name?

Wil.—Baron Wildenhain.

Fred.—And does he live on this estate?

Wil.—There formerly his mother lived. She is dead. He married a rich lady in Franconia, and, as is said, through affection for her, went to dwell there. A steward occupies the castle, who manages everything as he likes.

Fred.—I will away to the Baron—I will face him boldly. I will bear you upon my back to him. How far is it to Franconia?—twenty to thirty miles, perhaps. How! Did he escape his conscience by flying so short a way? Truly, it must be a

lazy, sluggish conscience, if, after following him twenty years, it has not yet overtaken him. Oh, shame, shame on him! Why should I claim acquaintance with my father, if he be a villain? Cannot my heart be satisfied with a mother—a mother who has taught me to love? Why should I seek a father who teaches me to hate? No! I will not go to him. He may remain quietly where he is, feasting and reveling till his last hour, and then he may see what account he can give of his actions to the Almighty Judge. We do not want him, mother; we will live without him. But what is the matter? How your countenance is altered in a single moment!—mother, what is the matter?

Wil.—(Very much exhausted, and almost fainting.) Nothing, nothing. The transport—too much talking. I should like a little rest.

Fred.—Heavens! I never perceived before that we were on the highway. (Knocks at the door of the public house.) Holla, landlord!

Land.—(Opening the window.) Well, what now?

Fred.—Let this good woman have a bed directly.

Land.—(With a sneer.) She have a bed, indeed! Ha! ha! ha! a pretty joke, truly! She slept last night in my stable, and has, perhaps, bewitched all the cattle in it.

(Shuts the window.)

Fred.—(Taking up a stone in a rage.) Infernal scoundrel! (Looks at his mother, and throws the stone away.) Oh, my poor mother! (Knocks in the anguish of despair at the door of a cottage, which stands further in the background.) Holla! holla!

Enter a Cottager from the hut.

Cottager.—God bless you! What do you want?

Fred.—Good friend, you see that this poor sick woman is fainting in the open air. She is my mother. Let her have some little spot to rest upon for half an hour. For Heaven's sake do, and God will reward you for it.

Cot.—Hold your tongue. I understand you. (Putting his head into the house.) Rachel, make up the bed directly. You may lay the child on the bench while you do it. (Returns.)

Don't begin a long history again about God's reward and Heaven's blessing. If God were to reward all such trifles He would have enough to do. Come! take hold of the good woman on that side, while I support her on this, and let us lead her in with care. She shall have as good a bed as I am worth; but she will not find much more in my cottage, I must own.

(They conduct her into the hut.)

ACT II.

SCENE—A room in the cottage. Wilhelmina is discovered sitting on a wooden stool, and resting her head on Frederick's breast. The cottager and his wife are busily employed in procuring whatever can conduce to the comfort of their sick guest.

Frederick.—Have you nothing which will refresh and strengthen her, good people?

Wife.—Run, husband, and fetch a bottle of wine from our neighbor's public house.

Fred.—Oh, spare yourselves that trouble. His wine is as sour as his disposition. She has already drank some of it, and I fear it has poisoned her.

Cottager.—Look, Rachel, whether the black hen has laid an egg this morning. A new-laid egg, boiled soft——

Wife.—Or a handful of ripe currants——

Cot.—Or—the best thing I have—a piece of bacon——

Wife.—There is still a little brandy standing below in the dairy.

Fred.—(Deeply affected.) God reward and bless you for your readiness to assist my poor mother!—(to Wilhelmina.) You have heard these good people? (Wilhelmina nods.) Can you relish anything they have offered? (Wilhelmina makes a motion with her hand that she cannot.)—Alas! is there then no surgeon in the neighborhood?

Cot.—We have a farrier in the village, whom we always call Doctor; and I never saw any other in my life.

Fred.—Merciful Heavens! What shall I do? She will die in my arms! Gracious God! have compassion on our distresses. Pray, pray, good people—I cannot pray.

Wil.—(In a broken voice.) Be at ease, dear Frederick—I am well—only faint—very faint. A glass of—good wine—

Fred.—Yes, mother, instantly. Oh, God! where can I procure it? I have no money. I have nothing at all.

Wife.—There! Now, you see, husband, if you had not carried the money to the steward yesterday—

Cot.—I might have assisted this good woman. Why, that's true, to be sure. But how are we to manage matters now? As true as I am an honest man, I have not a single dreyer in the house.

Fred.—Then I will—yes, I will beg—and if no one will be charitable, I will steal. Good people, take care of her, and do what you can for her. I shall soon be with you again.

(Exit.)

Cot.—If he would go to our pastor's, I am sure he would succeed.

Wil.—Is the old pastor still alive?

Wife.—Oh, no. God bless his worthy heart. He died about two years since, old, and weary of life.

Cot.—Yes, he went out like a lamp, as one may say.

Wife.—(Wiping her eyes.) We have shed many a tear for the loss of him.

Cot.—(The same.) He was our father.

Wil.—(Deeply affected.) Our father.

Wife.—We shall never have such another.

Cot.—Come, come! give every one his due—and despise nobody. Our present pastor is a good, worthy man, too.

Wife.—Why, he is, to be sure; but he is so young.

Cot.—I own his appearance does not claim quite so much respect, and we can't confide in him so soon: but our late pastor had been young, too.

Wife.—(To Wilhelmina.) This gentleman was tutor to our Baron's daughter; and as my Lord was very well satisfied with him, he gave him this living.

Cot.—Aye, and he deserved it, too; for the young lady of the castle (God bless her!) is a friendly, kind creature as ever lived.

Wife.—Yes, she has no pride; for when she comes into the church she nods here and there, on this side and that, to the country women.

Cot.—And when she is in the pew she holds her fan before her face, and prays with real devotion.

Wife.—And during the sermon she never turns her eyes from the pastor.

Wil.—(Alarmed.) What lady is this?

Cot.—Our Baron's daughter.

Wil.—Is she here?

Wife.—To be sure she is. Didn't you know that? It will be five weeks next Friday since my Lord's family arrived at the castle.

Wil.—Do you mean Baron Wildenhain?

Wife.—Exactly.

Wil.—And his lady?

Cot.—His lady is dead. They lived several hundred miles from this place; and during her Ladyship's life the Baron never came hither, which has caused us many a sorrow. (In a lower voice, and in a confidential tone.) Folks say she was a haughty woman, and full of whims. Well! well! We ought not to speak ill of the dead. Our Baron is a good gentleman. She had no sooner closed her eyes, than he ordered his coach, and came to Wildenhain. Oh! he must like this place; for he was born here and has often played with me in the meadows, and danced with my wife on a Sunday under the lime-trees. You remember that, Rachel—eh?

Wife.—That I do, as well as if it had been yesterday. He used to wear a red coat, and a pair of buckles made of glittering stones.

Cot.—Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild; but we must make allowances for young people. The soil was good, and the best of land sometimes produces weeds.

Wife.—But do you recollect, husband, what happened at the castle between him and Boetcher's daughter, Wilhelmina? That was too bad.

Cot.—Pshaw! hold your tongue, Rachel. Who would think of talking about that, when so many years are past since it happened, and when nobody knows whether he was really the father of the child? for she never would confess it.

Wife.—He was the father, and nobody else, that I am sure of; and I'll bet my best gown and cap upon it. No, no, husband, you must not defend that—it was too bad. Who knows whether the poor creature did not perish in distress? Her father, too, old Boetcher, was driven to his grave by it, and died broken-hearted. (Wilhelmina faints.)

Cot.—(Who first observes it.) Rachel! Rachel! Support her! Zounds! support her.

Wife.—Oh! mercy on us! The poor woman!

Cot.—Away with her to bed directly! Then let us send for the pastor. She will hardly live till morning.

(They carry her in.)

SCENE—A room in the castle. The breakfast table is discovered. A servant places on the table a tea-urn, a lighted candle, and a wax taper.

Enter the Baron in his night-gown.

Baron.—Is the Count in bed still?

Servant.—No, my lord. He has sent for his servant to dress his hair.

Bar.—I might have discovered that; for the hall, as I passed through it, was scented with poudre à la Marechal.—Call my daughter. (Exit Servant.)

The Baron fills and lights his pipe.

I cannot but think that my friend, the old privy counsellor, has sent me a complete coxcomb. Everything he says and does is as insipid and silly as his countenance. No—I will not be too hasty. My Amelia is too dear to me to be bestowed on

anyone who is not worthy of her. I must be rather better acquainted with the young man; for my intimacy with his father shall never induce me to make my daughter miserable. The poor girl would consent, and would then sit in a corner dejected and repining, and blaming her father, who ought to have understood these matters better. What a pity, what a great pity it is, that the girl was not a boy! That the name of Wildenhain must be extinct!—(blows out the wax taper, with which he had lighted his pipe)—and vanish like the flame which I now blow out. My fine estates, my delightful prospects, my honest tenantry—all, all will fall into the hands of a stranger. How unfortunate!

Enter Amelia in a careless morning dress.

Amelia.—(Kisses the Baron's hand.) Good morning to you, my dear father.

Bar.—Good morning, Amelia. Have you slept well?

Ame.—Oh, yes!

Bar.—Indeed! You have slept very well? You were not at all uneasy?

Ame.—No. The gnats, to be sure, hummed rather too much in my ears.

Bar.—The gnats! Well, that is of no great consequence. Let a bough of juniper be burned in the room, and you will not be troubled with them again. Gnats are more easily driven away than maggots.

Ame.—Oh, no. You may drive maggots away by boiling a few peas with a little quicksilver, for that will kill them.

Bar.—(Smiling.) Indeed? It is well for you, Amelia, if you as yet know no maggots which cannot be destroyed by a plate of peas.

Ame.—Oh, you mean maggots in the head. No, father, I am not troubled with them.

Bar.—So much the better! But how, indeed, can a lively girl, when only sixteen years of age, be troubled with whims, while she has a father who loves her, and a suitor who begs permission to love her? How do you like the Count von der Mulde?

Ame.—Very well.

Bar.—Don't you blush when I mention his name?

Ame.—(Feeling her cheeks.) No.

Bar.—No! Hem! Have you not been dreaming of him?

Ame.—No.

Bar.—Have you not dreamed at all, then?

Ame.—(Reflecting.) Yes. I dreamed of our pastor.

Bar.—Ha! ha! As he stood before you, and demanded the ring?

Ame.—Oh, no! I dreamed we were in Franconia, and that he was still my tutor. He was just going to leave us, and I wept very much; and when I awoke, my eyes were really wet.

Bar.—I'll tell you what, Amelia; when you dream of the pastor again, fancy him at the altar, and you with the Count von der Mulde before him, exchanging the marriage vow. What think you of this?

Ame.—If you desire it, my dear father, I will obey most cheerfully.

Bar.—Zounds! No. I don't desire it. But I want to know whether you love him—whether you feel sincere affection for him. When we spent a short time in town last winter, you saw him several times at public places of amusement.

Ame.—Should I feel an affection for all the men I see at public places of amusement?

Bar.—Amelia, don't be so stupid. I mean that the Count von der Mulde flirted and paid attention to you, danced a couple of elegant minuets with you, perfumed your handkerchief with eau de mille fleurs, and at the same time whispered the Lord knows how many pretty things in your ear.

Ame.—Yes, the Lord knows, as you say, father; but I am sure I don't.

Bar.—What! have you forgotten them?

Ame.—If it be your wish, I will endeavor to recollect them.

Bar.—No, no. You need not trouble yourself. If you must endeavor to recollect them you will bring them from a corner of your memory, not from a corner of your heart. You don't love him, then?

Ame.—I believe I don't.

Bar.—(Aside.) I believe so, too.—But I must tell you what connection there is between his visit and my interrogatories. His father is a privy counsellor—a man of fortune and consequence—do you hear?

Ame.—Yes, my dear father, I hear this, if you desire it: but our pastor always told me I was not to listen to such things; for rank and wealth, he said, were only the gifts of chance.

Bar.—Well, well! our pastor is perfectly in the right; but if it happen that wealth and rank are combined with merit, they are to be considered an advantage. Do you understand me?

Ame.—Yes, but—(with perfect simplicity)—is that the case with the Count von der Mulde?

Bar.—(At a loss how to reply.) Hem! Why—hem! His father has rendered important services to the state. He is one of my oldest friends, and assisted me in paying my addresses to your mother. I have always had a sincere regard for him; and as he so much wishes the match between you and his son to take place, from a conviction that you will in time feel an affection for the young man—

Ame.—Does he think so?

Bar.—Yes; but it almost seems you are not of the same opinion.

Ame.—Not exactly. But if you desire it, my dear father—

Bar.—Zounds! I tell you that in such cases I desire nothing. A marriage without affection is slavery. None should be united who do not feel attached to each other by a congeniality of sentiments. I don't want to couple a nightingale with a finch. If you like each other, why marry each other. If you don't, let it alone.—(In a calmer tone.) Do you understand me, Amelia? The whole matter rests on this question: Can you love the Count? If not, we will send him home again.

Ame.—My dear father, I really don't feel as if I should ever love him. I have so often read a description of love in romances—how strange and unaccountable are the sensations—

Bar.—Pshaw! Let me hear no more of your romances, for the authors of them know nothing about love. There are certain little symptoms of it, which can only be learned by experience. Come, let me ask you a few questions, and answer them with sincerity.

Ame.—I always do so.

Bar.—Are you pleased when any one speaks of the Count?

Ame.—Good or ill?

Bar.—Good, good.

Ame.—Oh, yes. I like to hear good of anyone.

Bar.—But do you not feel a kind of sympathy when you hear him mentioned? (She shakes her head.) Are you not embarrassed? (She shakes her head.) Don't you sometimes wish to hear him mentioned, but have not courage to begin the subject? (She shakes her head.) Don't you defend him, when anyone censures him?

Ame.—When I can, I certainly do; for our pastor—

Bar.—I am not talking about the pastor. When you see the Count, how do you feel?

Ame.—Very well.

Bar.—Are you not somewhat alarmed when he approaches you?

Ame.—No. (Suddenly recollecting herself.) But, yes; I am sometimes.

Bar.—Aye, aye. Now we come to the point.

Ame.—Because he once trod upon my foot at a ball.

Bar.—Amelia, don't be so stupid. Do you cast down your eyes when he is present?

Ame.—I don't cast down my eyes in the presence of anyone.

Bar.—Don't you arrange your dress, or play with the end of your sash, when he speaks to you?

Ame.—No.

Bar.—Does not your face glow when he pays you a compliment, or mentions anything which refers to love and marriage?

Ame.—I don't remember that he ever mentioned anything of the kind.

Bar.—Hem! Hem!—(After a pause.) Do you ever yawn when he is talking to you?

Ame.—No, my dear father; that would be rude.

Bar.—But do you ever feel inclined to yawn on those occasions?

Ame.—Yes.

Bar.—Indeed! There are but little hopes, then.—Do you think him handsome?

Ame.—I don't know.

Bar.—Don't you know what is meant by the term handsome? Or, don't you feel what is meant by the term handsome?

Ame.—Yes, I do; but I never observed him with the idea of discovering whether I thought him handsome.

Bar.—This is bad, indeed.—When he arrived last night—how did you feel?

Ame.—I felt vexed; for I was just walking with the pastor to the romantic little hill, when the servant so unseasonably called me away.

Bar.—Unseasonably! Indeed! But another question! Have you not to-day, without intending it, taken more pains in curling your hair, and chosen a more engaging dress?

Ame.—(Looking at herself.) This dress is not yet dirty. I have only worn it yesterday and the day before.

Bar.—(Aside.) Little consolation for the Count is to be deduced from these replies. Therefore, my dear girl, you will have nothing to do with the Count, I suppose?

Ame.—If you command it, I will.

Bar.—(Angry.) Hark you, Amelia. If you plague me again with your damned desires and commands, I shall—I shall be almost inclined to command in reality.—(In a milder tone.) To see you happy is my wish, and this can never be effected by a command. Matrimony, my child, is a discordant duet, if the tones do not properly agree; for which reason our great Composer has planted the pure harmony of love in our hearts. I'll send the pastor to you. He can explain these matters more clearly.

Ame.—(Delighted.) The pastor!

Bar.—Yes. He can describe the duties of the married state in better terms than a father. Then examine your heart, and if you feel the Count to be the man toward whom you can fulfill these duties—why, Heaven bless you both! Till then, let us say no more upon this subject.—(Calls.) Thomas!

Enter a Servant.

Go to the pastor, and request him to come hither for a quarter of an hour, if his business will allow it. (Exit Servant.)

Ame.—(Calling after him.) Tell him I shall be glad to see him, too.

Enter Count.

Count.—Ah, bon jour, mon Colonel. Fair lady, I kiss your hand.

(Amelia curtsies and returns no answer.)

Bar.—Good morning! good morning! But, my Lord, it is almost noon. In the country you must learn to rise at an earlier hour.

Count.—Pardonnez, mon Colonel. I rose soon after your great clock struck six. But my homme de chambre was guilty of a betise, which has driven me to absolute despair; a loss, which pour le moment cannot be repaired.

Bar.—I am sorry for it.

(Amelia presents tea to the Count.)

Count.—(As he takes it.) Your most obedient and submissive slave! Is it Hebe herself, or Venus in her place?

(Amelia moves with a smile.)

Bar.—(Somewhat peevishly.) Neither Venus nor Hebe, but Amelia Wildenhain, with your permission. May one know what you have lost?

Count.—Oh, mon dieu! Help me to banish from my mind the triste recollection. I am lost in a labyrinth of doubts and perplexities. I am, as it were, envelopé. I believe I shall be obliged to write a letter on the occasion.

Bar.—Come, come! It is not so very sad a misfortune, I hope.

Count.—(As he sips his tea.) Nectar, I vow! Nectar positively, angelic lady. But, how could I expect anything else from your fair hands?

Bar.—This nectar was sold to me for Congo tea.

Ame.—You have still not told us what you have lost, my Lord.

Bar.—(Aside.) His understanding.

Count.—You command—your slave obeys. You tear open the wounds which even your fascinating society had scarcely healed. My *homme de chambre*, the *vaut rien*! Oh, the creature is a *mauvais sujet*! When he packed up my clothes the day before yesterday, I said to him, "Henri, in that window stands the little pot de pommade." You comprehend me, lovely Miss Amelia? I expressly said, "Don't forget it: pack it up." I dare say I repeated this three or four times. "You know, Henri," I said to him, "I cannot exist without this pot de pommade." For you must know, most amiable Amelia, this pommade cannot be made in Germany. The people here don't understand it. They can't give it the odors. Oh! I do assure you it is incomparable; it comes tout droit from Paris. The manufacturer of it is *parfumeur du roi*. More than once, when I have attended as *dèjour* to Her Royal Highness the Princess Adelaide, she has said to me, "Mon dieu, Comte, the whole antechamber is *parfumé* whenever you are my *dèjour*." Now only conceive, accomplished Miss Amelia—only conceive, my Lord—completely forgotten is the whole pot de pommade—left in the window as sure as I am a cavalier.

Bar.—Yes, unless the mice have devoured it.

Ame.—(Smiling.) Unpardonable neglect!

Count.—It is, indeed! The mice, too! *Helas! voila, mon Colonel, une autre raison, for desespoir*. And could you conceive now that this careless creature, this Henri, has been thirty years in our service? Thirty years has he been provided with everything necessary for a man of his extraction, and how does he evince his gratitude? How does the fellow behave? He forgets the pot de pommade! leaves it standing

in the window as sure as I am a cavalier, and—oh, ciel, perhaps the vulgar German mice have swallowed the most delicate parfum ever produced by France! But it was impossible to moderate my anger. Diable! It was impossible—therefore I discharged the fellow on the spot.

Bar.—(Starting.) How! A man who had been thirty years in the service of your family!

Count.—Oh! don't be alarmed on my account, mon cher Colonel. I have another in petto—a charming valet, I assure you—an homme comme il faut. He dresses hair like a divinity.

Ame.—And poor Henry must be discharged for such a trifle!

Count.—What do you say, lovely Miss Amelia? A trifle! Can you call this a mere bagatelle?

Ame.—To deprive a poor man of his subsistence—

Count.—Mais, mon dieu! How can I do less? Has he not deprived me of my pommade?

Ame.—Allow me to intercede in his behalf.

Count.—Your sentiments enchant me; but your benevolence must not be abused. The fellow has an absolute quantité of children, who, in time, when they reach the age mûr, will maintain their stupid father.

Ame.—Has he a family, too? Oh, I beseech you, my Lord, retain him in your service.

Count.—You are aimable, ma cher Mademoiselle—vraiment, vous êtes très aimable. You command—your slave obeys. Henri shall come, and submissively return you thanks.

Bar.—(Aside, impatiently rubbing his hands.) No. It cannot, shall not be. The coxcomb!—(Aloud.) What think you, Count, of an hour's diversion in the field before dinner? Do you shoot?

Count.—(Kissing the ends of his fingers.) Bravo, mon Colonel! A most charming proposition! I accept it with rapture. Lovely Miss Amelia, you shall see my shooting-dress. It is quite à la mode de Paris. I ordered it expressly for this tour. And my fowling piece. Ah, Monsieur le Colonel, you never saw such a beauty. The stock is made of mother-of-pearl, and my arms are carved upon it. Oh! you have no conception of the gout displayed in it.

Bar.—(Dryly.) I asked you before, my Lord, whether you were a shooter.

Count.—I have only been out once or twice in my life, and par hazard I killed nothing.

Bar.—My gun is plain and old; but I generally bring my bird down.

Enter a Servant.

Servant.—The pastor begs permission—

Bar.—Well, Count, be as quick as you can in putting on your elegant shooting dress. I shall be ready for you in a few minutes.

Count.—I fly. Beauteous Miss Amelia, I feel the sacrifice I am making to your father, when for a couple of hours I thus tear myself from his fille aimable. (Exit.)

Bar.—Amelia, it is scarcely necessary that I should speak to the pastor, or he to you. But, however, as he is here, leave us together. I have, indeed, other matters respecting which I wish to have some conversation with him.

Ame.—(As she goes.) Father, I think I never can love the Count.

Bar.—As you please.

Ame.—(With great affability as she meets the pastor at the door.) Good morning to you, my dear sir!

Enter Pastor.

Pastor.—By your desire, my Lord—

Bar.—No ceremony. Forgive me if my summons arrived at an inconvenient time. I'll tell you in a few words what I want to mention. I last night received a most wretched translation from the French, which was issued from the press about twenty years ago. I am myself in possession of a very neat German original, of which, without vanity, I am the author. Now, I am required to erase my name from the work, and let it be bound with this vapid translation. I therefore wish to ask you, as the corrector of my book, what you think of this intended combination.

Pas.—Upon my word, I do not understand your allegory, my Lord.

Bar.—Don't you? Hem! I'm sorry for it. I was inwardly complimenting myself upon the dextrous way in which I had managed it. Well, to be plain with you, the young Count von der Mulde is here, and wants to marry my daughter.

Pas.—(Starts, but immediately recovers his composure.) Indeed!

Bar.—The man is a Count, and nothing else upon earth. He is—he is—in short, I don't like him.

Pas.—(Rather eagerly.) And Miss Amelia?

Bar.—(Mimicking her.) As you desire—If you desire—What you desire.—well, well! you have a better opinion of my understanding, I hope, than to suppose that I should influence her on such an occasion. Were the fellow's head not quite so empty, and his heart not depraved, I must own the connection would have pleased me, for his father is one of my most intimate friends; and the match is on many accounts desirable in other respects.

Pas.—In other respects! In what respect can the alliance with a man be desirable, whose head and heart are bad?

Bar.—Why—I mean with regard to rank and consequence. If Amelia were attached to another, I would not throw away a remark upon the subject, nor would I ask "Who is the man?" but (pointing to his heart) "Is all right here? If so, enough; marry each other; you have my blessing, and I hope Heaven's, too." But Amelia is not attached to any other, and that alters the medium through which I consider this subject.

Pas.—And will she never be attached to anyone?

Bar.—That is, to be sure, another question. Well, I don't mean—I don't insist upon anything of the kind. I don't desire or command it, as Amelia says. I only wish to act in such a way that the Count von der Mulde's father shall not be offended if I don't honor the Bill which he has drawn upon my daughter, for he has a right to say value received, having conferred many civilities and kindnesses upon me. I wish, therefore, my worthy friend, that you would explain to my daughter the duties of a wife and mother; and when she has

properly understood this, I wish you to ask her whether she is willing to fulfill these duties at the side of the young Count. If she says no—not another word. What think you of this?

Pas.—I—to be sure—I must own—I am at your service—I will speak to Miss Amelia.

Bar.—Do so. (Heaving a deep sigh.) I have removed one burden from my mind; but, alas! a far heavier still oppresses it. You understand me. How is it, my friend, that you have as yet been unable to gain any intelligence upon this subject?

Pas.—I have used my utmost endeavors—but hitherto in vain.

Bar.—Believe me, this unfortunate circumstance causes me many a sleepless night. We are often guilty of an error in our youth, which, when advanced in life, we would give our whole fortunes to obliterate: for the man who cannot boldly turn his head to survey his past life must be miserable, especially as the retrospect is so nearly connected with futurity.

(Exit.)

Pas.—(Alone.) What a commission has he imposed upon me! Upon me!—(Looking fearfully around.) Heaven forbid that I should encounter Amelia before I have recollected and prepared myself for the interview! At present I should be unable to say a word upon the subject. I will take a walk in the fields, and offer up a prayer to the Almighty. Then will I return. But, alas! the instructor must alone return—the man must stay at home.

(Exit.)

ACT III.

SCENE—An open field. Enter Frederick.

Frederick.—(Looking at a few pieces of money, which he holds in his hand.) Shall I return with this paltry sum—return to see my mother die? No. Rather will I spring into the first pond I meet with. Rather will I wander to the end of the world. Alas! I feel as if my feet were clogged with dead. I can neither proceed nor retreat. The sight of yonder

straw-thatched cottage, in which my mother now lies a prey to consuming sorrow—oh, why do my eyes forever turn toward it? Are there not fertile fields and laughing meadows all around me? Why must my eyes be so powerfully attracted to that cottage, which contains all my joys and all my sorrows?—(With asperity, while surveying the money.) Is this your charity, ye men? This coin was given me by the rider of a stately steed, who was followed by a servant in a magnificent livery, glittering with silver. This was bestowed upon me by a sentimental lady, who was on her travels, and had just alighted from her carriage to admire the beauties of the country, intending hereafter to publish a description of them. "That hut," said I to her, and my tears would not allow me to proceed— "It is very picturesque and romantic," answered she, and skipped into the carriage. This was the gift of a fat priest, in an enormous wig, who at the same time called me an idle vagabond, and thereby robbed his present of its whole value.—(Much affected.) This dreyer was given me by a beggar unsolicited. He shared his little all with me, and blessed me, too. Oh! this coin will be of great value at a future day. The Almighty Judge will repay the donor with interest beyond earthly calculation.—(A pause—then again looking at the money.) What can I attempt to buy with this? The paltry sum would not pay for the nails of my mother's coffin—and scarcely for a halter to hang myself with.—(Looking toward the horizon.) Yonder I see the proud turrets of the Prince's residence. Shall I go thither and implore assistance? Alas! compassion does not dwell in cities. The cottage of poverty is her palace, and the heart of the poor her temple. Oh, that some recruiting party would pass this way! I would engage myself for five rix-dollars. Five rix-dollars! What a sum! It is, perhaps, at this moment staked on many a card.—(Wipes the sweat from his forehead.) Father! Father! Upon thee fall these drops of agony! Upon thee fall my despair, and whatever may be its consequences! Oh, mayst thou hereafter pant for pardon, as my poor mother is now panting for a single glass of wine.—(The noise of shooters is heard at a distance. A gun is fired, and several pointers cross the stage. Frederick looks around.) Shooters! Noblemen, perhaps! Yes, yes! They appear to be persons of rank. Well, once more will I beg. I beg for a

mother. Oh, God! grant that I may find benevolent and charitable hearts.

Enter Baron.

Baron.—(Looking behind him.) Here, here, my Lord!

Enter Count, out of breath.

That was a sad mistake. The dogs ran this way, but all the game escaped.

Count.—(Breathing with difficulty.) Tant mieux, tant mieux, mon Colonel. We can take a little breath then. (Supports himself on his gun, while the Baron stands in the background, observing the dogs.)

Fred.—(Advancing toward the Count, with reserve.) Noble sir, I implore your charity.

Count.—(Measuring him from head to foot with a look of contempt.) How, mon ami! You are a very impertinent fellow, let me tell you. Why you have the limbs of an Hercule, and shoulders as broad as those of Cretan Milo. I'll venture to say you can carry an ox on your back—or an ass at least, of which there seem to be many grazing in this neighborhood.

Fred.—Perhaps I might, if you, sir, would allow me to make the attempt.

Count.—Our police is not vigilant enough with respect to vagrants and idle fellows.

Fred.—(With a significant look.) I am of your opinion, sir.—(Turns to the Baron, who is advancing.) Noble sir, have compassion on an unfortunate son, who is become a beggar for the support of his sick mother.

Bar.—(Putting his hand into his pocket, and giving Frederick a trifle.) It would be more praiseworthy in you, young man, to work for your sick mother, than to beg for her.

Fred.—Most willingly will I do that; but to-day her necessities are too urgent. Forgive me, noble sir; what you have given me is not sufficient.

Bar.—(With astonishment and a half smile.) Not sufficient!

Fred.—No, by Heaven, it is not sufficient.

Bar.—Singular enough! But I don't choose to give any more.

Fred.—If you possess a benevolent heart, give me a guilder.

Bar.—For the first time in my life I am told by a beggar how much I am to give him.

Fred.—A guilder, noble sir. You will thereby preserve a fellow-creature from despair.

Bar.—You must have lost your senses, man. Come, Count.

Count.—Allons, mon Colonel.

Fred.—For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, bestow one guilder on me. It will preserve the lives of two fellow-creatures.—(Seeing them pass on, he kneels.) A guilder, gentlemen! You will never again purchase the salvation of a human being at so cheap a rate.—(They proceed. Frederick draws his side-arms, and furiously seizes the Baron.) Your purse or your life!

Bar.—(Alarmed.) How! What? Holla! Help! (Several Gamekeepers rush in and disarm Frederick. The Count in the meantime runs away.)

Fred.—Heavens! what have I done?

Bar.—Away with him to the castle! Confine him in the tower and keep strict watch over him till I return. Take good care lest he should attempt to escape.

Fred.—(Kneeling.) I have only to make one request, noble sir. I have forfeited my life, and you may do with me what you please; but, oh, assist my wretched mother, who is falling a sacrifice to penury in yonder hut. Send thither, I beseech you, and inquire whether I am telling you a falsehood. For my mother I drew that weapon, and for her will I shed my blood.

Bar.—Take him to the tower, I say; and let him live on bread and water.

Fred.—(As he is led away by the Gamekeepers.) Cursed be my father for having given me being. (Exit.)

Bar.—(Calling to the last of the Gamekeepers.) Francis! run down to the village. In the first, second or third house—you will make it out—inquire for a sick woman; and if you find one, give her this purse.

Gamekeeper.—Very well, my Lord.

(Exit.)

Bar.—This is a most singular adventure, on my soul. The young man's countenance had noble expression in it; and if it be true that he was begging for his mother, that for his mother he became a robber—well! well! I must investigate the matter.

(Exit.)

SCENE—A room in the castle.

Enter Amelia.

Amelia.—Why do I feel so peevish and discontented? No one has done anything to vex me. I did not intend to come into this room, but was going into the garden.—(She is walking out, but suddenly returns.) No, I think I'll stay here. Yet I might as well see whether my auriculas are yet in flower and whether the apple-kernels, which our pastor lately sowed, be sprung up. Oh, they must.—(Again turning around.) Yet, if anyone should come who wanted to see me I should not be here, and perhaps the servant might not find me. No, I'll stay here. But the time will pass very slowly.—(Tears a nosegay.) Hark! I hear someone at the front door. No; it was the wind. I must look how my canary birds do. But if anyone should come and not find me in the parlor—but who can come? Why do I at once feel such a glow spreading over my face?—(A pause. She begins to weep.) What can I want?—(Sobbing.) Why am I thus oppressed?

Enter Pastor.

(Approaching him with a friendly air, and wiping away a tear.) Oh, good morning, my dear sir. Reverend sir, I should say. Excuse me, if custom makes me sometimes say dear sir.

Pastor.—Continue to say so, I beg, Miss Amelia. I feel a gratification in hearing that term applied to me by you.

Ame.—Do you, indeed?

Pas.—Most certainly I do. But am I mistaken, or have you really been weeping? May I inquire what caused those tears?

Ame.—I don't know.

12—Vol. XXI.

Pas.—The recollection of her Ladyship, your mother, perhaps?

Ame.—I could say yes, but—

Pas.—Oh, I understand you. It is a little female secret. I do not wish to pry into it. Forgive me, Miss Amelia, if I appear at an unseasonable hour, but it is by his Lordship's desire.

Ame.—You are always welcome.

Pas.—Indeed! am I really? Oh, Amelia!

Ame.—My father says that we are more indebted to those who form our hearts and minds than to those who give us mere existence. My father says this—(casting down her eyes)—and my heart says so, too.

Pas.—What a sweet recompense is this moment for my eight years of attention!

Ame.—I was wild and giddy. I have, no doubt, often caused you much uneasiness. It is but fair that I should feel a regard for you on that account.

Pas.—(Aside.) Oh, heavens!—(Aloud, and stammering.) I—I am—deputed by his Lordship—your father—to explain—Will you be seated?

Ame.—(Brings him a chair immediately.) Don't let me prevent you, but I had rather stand.

Pas.—(Pushes the chair away.) The Count von der Mulde is arrived here

Ame.—Yes.

Pas.—Do you know for what purpose?

Ame.—Yes; he wants to marry me.

Pas.—He does!—(Somewhat eagerly.) But believe me, Miss Amelia, your father will not compel you to marry him against your inclination.

Ame.—I know he will not.

Pas.—But he wishes—he wants to ascertain the extent of your inclination, and has appointed me to converse with you on the subject.

Ame.—On the subject of my inclination toward the Count?

Pas.—Yes—no—toward matrimony it is.

Amc.—What I do not understand must be indifferent to me, and I am totally ignorant of matrimony.

Pas.—For that very reason am I come hither, Miss Amelia. Your father has directed me to point out to you the pleasant and unpleasant side of the married state.

Amc.—Let me hear the unpleasant first, then, my dear sir. I like to reserve the best to conclude with.

Pas.—The unpleasant! Oh, Miss Amelia, when two affectionate, congenial hearts are united to each other, matrimony has no unpleasant side. Hand-in-hand the happy couple pass through life. When they find thorns scattered on their path they carefully and cheerfully remove them. When they arrive at a stream, the stronger bears the weaker through it. When they are obliged to climb a mountain, the stronger supports the weaker on his arm. Patience and affection are their attendants. What would be to one impossible, is to the two united a mere trifle; and when they have reached the goal, the weaker wipes the sweat from the forehead of the stronger. Joy or care takes up its abode with both at the same time. The one never shelters sorrow while happiness is the guest of the other. Smiles play upon the countenances, or tears tremble in the eyes of both at the same time. But their joys are more lively than the joys of a solitary individual, and their sorrows milder; for participation enhances bliss and softens care. Thus may their life be compared to a fine summer's day—fine, even though a storm pass over; for the storm refreshes nature and adds fresh luster to the unclouded sun. Thus they stand arm in arm on the evening of their days, beneath the blossomed trees which they themselves have planted and reared, waiting the approach of night. Then—yes—then, indeed, one of them lies down to sleep, and that is the happy one; for the other wanders to and fro, weeping and lamenting that he cannot yet sleep. This is, in such a case, the only unpleasant side of matrimony.

Amc.—I'll marry.

Pas.—Right, Miss Amelia! The picture is alluring; but forget not that two affectionate beings sat for it. When rank and equipages, or when caprice and levity, have induced a couple to unite themselves for life, matrimony has no pleasant

side. While free, their steps were light and airy; but now, the victims of their own folly, they drag along their chains. Disgust lowers upon each brow. Pictures of lost happiness appear before their eyes, painted by the imagination, and more alluring in proportion to the impossibility of attaining them. Sweet enchanting ideas forever haunt them, which, had this union not taken place, would, perhaps, never have been realized; but the certainty of which is established were they not confined by their detested fetters. Thus they become the victims of despair, when, in another situation, the failure of anticipated happiness would but have roused their patience. Thus they accustom themselves to consider each other as the hateful cause of every misfortune which they undergo. Asperity is mingled with their conversation—coldness with their caresses. By no one are they so easily offended as by each other. What would excite satisfaction, if it happened to a stranger is, when it happens to either of this wretched pair, a matter of indifference to the other. Thus do they drag on a miserable life, with averted countenances, and with down-cast heads, until the night approaches, and the one lies down to rest. Then does the other joyfully raise the head, and, in a tone of triumph, exclaim, "Liberty! Liberty!" This is, in such a case, the only pleasant side of matrimony.

Ame.—I won't marry.

Pas.—That means, in other words, that you will not love anyone.

Ame.—But—yes—I will marry—for I will love—I do love someone.

Pas.—(Extremely surprised and alarmed.) The Count von der Mulde, then?

Ame.—Oh! no! no! Don't mention that silly, vain fool.—(Putting out both her hands toward him with the most familiar confidence.) I love you.

Pas.—Miss Amelia! for Heaven's sake——

Ame.—I will marry you.

Pas.—Me!

Ame.—Yes, you.

Pas.—Amelia, you forget——

Ame.—What do I forget?

Pas.—That you are of noble extraction.

Ame.—What hindrance is that?

Pas.—Oh, Heavens, no! It cannot be.

Ame.—Don't you feel a regard for me?

Pas.—I love you as much as my own life.

Ame.—Well, then marry me.

Pas.—Amelia, have compassion on me. I am a minister of religion, which bestows on me much strength—yet still—still am I but a man.

Ame.—You yourself have depicted the married state in the most lovely colors. I, therefore, am not the girl with whom you could wander hand-in-hand through this life—with whom you could share your joys and sorrows?

Pas.—None but you would I choose, Amelia, were I allowed that choice. Did we but live in those golden days of equality, which enraptured poets dwell upon, none but you would I choose. But, as the world now is, such a connection is beyond my reach. You must marry a nobleman. Whether I could make her happy will never be asked.

Ame.—Never will be asked! Yes; I shall ask that question. Have you not often told me that the heart alone can make a person noble? (Lays her hand upon his heart.) Oh! I shall marry a noble man.

Pas.—Miss Amelia, call, I beseech you, your reason to your aid. A hundred arguments may be advanced in opposition to such a union. But—just at this moment—heaven knows, not one occurs to me.

Ame.—Because there are none.

Pas.—There are, indeed. But my heart is so full—my heart consents—and that it must not, shall not do. Imagine to yourself how your relatives will sneer at you. They will decline all intercourse with you; be ashamed of their plebeian kinsman; invite the whole family, except yourself, on birthdays; shrug their shoulders when your name is mentioned; whisper your story in each other's ears; forbid their children to play with yours or to be on familiar terms with them; drive past

you in chariots emblazoned with the arms of Willdenhain and followed by footmen in laced liveries; while you humbly drive to church in a plain carriage with a servant in a gray frock behind it. They will scarcely seem to remember you when they meet you; or, should they demean themselves so far as to enter into conversation, they will endeavor, by every mortifying hint, to remind you that you are the parson's wife.

Ame.—Ha! Ha! Ha! Will not that be to remind me that I am happy?

Pas.—Can you laugh on such an occasion?

Ame.—Yes, I can indeed. You must forgive it; for you have been my tutor seven years, and never supported your doctrines and instructions with any arguments so feeble as those you have just advanced.

Pas.—I am sorry you think so—truly sorry, for——

Ame.—I am very glad, for——

Pas.—(Extremely embarrassed.) For——

Ame.—For you must marry me.

Pas.—Never!

Ame.—You know me. You know I am not an ill-tempered being; and when in your society, I always become better and better. I will take a great deal of pains to make you happy, or—no, I shall make you happy without taking any pains to effect it. We will live together so comfortably, so very comfortably—until one of us lies down to sleep, and then the other will weep. But that is far, far distant. Come! Consent, or I shall conclude you don't feel any regard for me.

Pas.—Oh! it is a glorious sensation to be a man of honor; but I feel, on this occasion, how difficult it is to acquire that sensation. Amelia, if you knew what tortures you inflict upon me—— No—I cannot—I cannot—I should sink to the earth as if struck by lightning, were I to attempt to meet the Baron with such a proposition.

Ame.—I'll do that myself.

Pas.—For heaven's sake, forbear. To his kindness and liberality am I indebted for my present comfortable circumstances. To his friendship and goodness am I indebted for the

happiest moments of my life. And shall I be such an ingrate as to mislead his only child? Oh, God! thou seest the purity of my intentions. Assist me in this trial with thy heavenly support.

Ame.—My father wishes me to marry. My father wishes to see me happy. Well! I will marry and be happy—but with no other than you. This will I say to my father; and do you know what will be his answer? At the first moment he will perhaps hesitate and say, “Amelia, are you mad?” But then he will recollect himself and add, with a smile, “Well, well! If you wish it, God bless you both!” Then I’ll kiss his hand, run out, and fall upon your neck. The villagers will soon learn that I am to be married to you. All the peasants and their wives will come to wish me joy; will implore heaven’s blessing on us; and oh, surely, surely heaven will bless us. I was ignorant before what it could be that lay so heavy on my heart; but I have now discovered it, for the burden is removed. (Seizing his hand.)

Pas.—(Withdrawing it.) Amelia, you almost drive me to distraction. You have robbed me of my peace of mind.

Ame.—Oh, no, no. How provoking! I hear somebody coming up stairs, and I had still a thousand things to say.

Enter Christian

(Peevishly.) Is it you, Christian?

Christian.—Yes, Miss Amelia. Christian Lebrecht Gold-man—

Hasten’d hither unto you

Soon as he the tidings knew.

Ame.—(Confused.) What tidings?

Chris.—Tidings which we all enjoy.

Pas.—(Alarmed.) You have been listening to our conversation, then?

Chris.—Not I, most reverend sir. Listeners hear no good of themselves. An old faithful servant, Miss Amelia, who has often carried her ladyship your mother in his arms, and after ward has often had the honor of receiving a box on the ear

from her ladyship's fair hand, wishes, on this happy occasion, to wait on you with his congratulation.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre!

Ame.—My dear Christian, I am not just now inclined to listen to your lyre. And what can you have to sing about to-day more than usual?

Chris.—Oh, my dearest, sweetest young lady, it is impossible that I can be silent to-day.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre!
Grant me more than usual fire.
Hither, hither, hither come,
Trumpet, fife and kettle-drum!
Join me in the lofty song,
Which shall boldly run along
Like a torrent——

Ame.—It does run along like a torrent, indeed, my dear Christian. Pray, try to proceed in humble prose.

Chris.—Impossible, Miss Amelia! There has never been a birth, a christening or a wedding since I have had the honor to serve this noble family and the noble family of my late lady, which old Christian's ready and obedient Muse has not celebrated. In the space of forty-six years, three hundred and ninety-seven congratulations have flowed from my pen. To-day I shall finish my three hundred and ninety-eighth. Who knows how soon a happy marriage may give occasion for my three hundred and ninety-ninth? Nine months after which my four hundredth may perhaps be wanted.

Ame.—To-day is Friday. That is the only remarkable circumstance with which I am acquainted.

Chris.—Friday! Very true, Miss Amelia. But it is a day marked by heaven as a day of joy; for our noble lord the Baron has escaped a most imminent danger.

Ame.—Danger! my father! What do you mean?

Chris.—Unto you I will unfold
What the gamekeepers have told.

Ame.—(Impatiently and with great anxiety.) Quick, then! What is the matter?

Chris.—The Baron and the Count (good luck!)

Were wand'ring on th' unbeaten track,
And both attentively did watch
For anything that they could catch.
Three turnip-closes they had past,
When they espied a hare at last.

Ame.—Oh! for heaven's sake, proceed in prose.

Chris.—Well, ma'am, as you insist upon it, I will, if I can. The Baron kills his hare, and a very fine one it is. I have just had the honor of seeing it. His lordship has wounded it most terribly in the left forefoot.

Ame.—(Impatiently.) Go on, go on. What happened to my father?

Chris.—A second hare had just been found, and the dogs were behaving extremely well, among which it is no injustice to mention Ponto; for a stauncher dog never went into a field. Well, their lordships, the Baron and Count, were suddenly accosted by a soldier, who implored their charity. One of the gamekeepers was a witness to the whole transaction at a distance. He saw his lordship the Baron, actuated by his charitable nature, draw a piece of money from his pocket and give it to the afore-mentioned soldier. Well, now, what think you? The ungrateful, audacious villain suddenly drew his bayonet, rushed like a mad-dog at my master, and if the gamekeepers had not instantly sprung forward, I, poor old man! should have been under the necessity of composing an elegy and an epitaph.

Ame.—(Affrighted.) Heavens!

Pas.—A robber—by broad daylight! That is singular indeed. Is not the man secured?

Chris.—To be sure he is. His lordship gave orders that, till further investigation could be made, he was to be confined in the tower. The gamekeeper who brought the intelligence says the whole party will soon be here. (Walks to the window.)]

verily believe—the sun dazzles my eyes a little—I verily believe they are coming yonder.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre!

(Exit.)

(Amelia and the Pastor walk to the window.)

Ama.—I never saw a robber in my life. He must have a dreadful countenance.

Pas.—Did you never see the female parricide in Lavater's Fragments?

Ama.—Horrible! A female parricide! Is there on this earth a creature so depraved? But look! The young man comes nearer. What an interesting, what a noble look he has! That melancholy, too, which overspreads his countenance! No, no; that cannot be a robber's countenance. I pity the poor man. Look! Oh, heavens! The gamekeepers are leading him to the tower. Hard-hearted men! Now they lock the door: now he is left in the horrid prison. What are the unfortunate young man's sensations!

Pas.—(Aside.) Hardly more distressing than mine.

Enter Baron.

Ama.—(Meeting him.) I congratulate you on your escape, most sincerely, my dear father.

Baron.—Let me have no more congratulations, I beseech you, for old Christian poured out such a volley of them in lyrics and Alexandrines as I came up stairs, that he has almost stunned me.

Pas.—His account is true, then? The story seemed incredible.

Ama.—Is that young man with the interesting countenance a robber?

Bar.—He is; but I am almost inclined to believe that he was one to-day for the first and last time in his life. It was a most extraordinary adventure. The young man begged for his mother, and I gave him a trifle. I might have given him something more, but the game just at that moment occupied my mind. You know, good pastor, when a man is in search of

diversion, he pays but little regard to the sufferings of his fellow-creatures. In short, he wanted more. Despair was expressed in his looks, but I turned my back upon him. He then forgot himself and drew his side-arms; but I'll bet my life against your head-dress, Amelia, that he is not accustomed to such practices.

Ame.—Oh, I am sure he is not.

Bar.—He trembled when he seized me. A child might have overpowered him. I almost wish I had suffered him to escape. This affair may cost him his life, and I might have saved the life of a fellow-creature for a guilder! If my people had not seen it—but the bad example— Come with me into my room, good pastor, and let us consider how we can best save this young man's life; for should he fall into the hands of justice, the law will condemn him without mercy. (Going.)

Ame.—Dear father, I have had a great deal of conversation with the Pastor.

Bar.—Have you? With respect to the holy state of matrimony?

Ame.—Yes; I have told him—

Pas.—(Much confused.) In compliance with your request—

Ame.—He won't believe me—

Pas.—I have explained to Miss Amelia—

Ame.—And I am sure I spoke from my heart—

Pas.—(Pointing to the door.) May I beg—

Ame.—But his diffidence—

Pas.—The result of our conversation I will explain in your room.

Bar.—What the deuce do you both mean? You won't allow each other to say a word. Amelia, have you forgotten the common rules of civility?

Ame.—Oh, no, dear father! But I may marry whom I like?

Bar.—Of course.

Ame.—(To the Pastor.) Do you hear?

Pas.—(Suddenly puts his handkerchief to his face.) I beg pardon—my nose bleeds. (Exit.)

Bar.—(Calling after him.) I expect you. (Going.)

Ame.—Stop one moment, dear father. I have something of importance to communicate.

Bar.—(Laughing.) Something of importance! You want a new fan, I suppose. (Exit.)

Ame.—(Alone.) A fan! I almost believe I do want a fan. (Fans herself with her pocket-handkerchief.) No. This is of no use. The heat which oppresses me is lodged within my bosom. Heavens! how my heart beats! I really love the Pastor most sincerely. How unfortunate it was that his nose should just begin to bleed at that moment! No; I can't endure the Count. When I look at my father, or the Pastor, I feel a kind of respect; but I only feel disposed to ridicule the Count. If I were to marry him, what silly tricks I should play with him! (Walks to the window.) The tower is still shut. Oh, how dreadful it must be to be confined in prison! I wonder whether the servants will remember to take him any victuals. (Beckoning and calling.) Christian! Christian! Come hither directly. The young man pleases me, though I don't know how or why. He has risked his life for his mother, and no bad man would do that.

Enter Christian.

Christian, have you given the prisoner anything to eat?

Christian.—Nice rye bread and clear pump water.

Ame.—For shame, Christian! Go into the kitchen directly and ask the cook for some cold meat. Then fetch a bottle of wine from the cellar, and take them to the prisoner.

Chris.—Most lovely Miss Amelia, I

Would you obey most willingly;

But, for the present, he must be satisfied with bread and water; for his lordship has expressly ordered—

Ame.—Oh, that my father did at first, when he was in a passion.

Chris.—What he commands when in a passion, it is his servant's duty to obey in cold blood.

Ame.—You are a silly man, Christian. Are you grown so old without having learned how to comfort a fellow-creature in distress? Give me the key of the cellar. I'll go myself.

Chris.—Most lovely Miss Amelia, I

Would you obey most willingly;

But—

Ame.—Give me the key directly, I command you.

Chris.—(Presents the key.) I shall instantly go to his lordship and exonerate myself from any blame which may ensue.

Ame.—That you may.

(Exit.)

ACT IV.

SCENE—A prison in an old tower of the castle.

Frederick is discovered alone.

Frederick.—Thus can a few poor moments, thus can a single voracious hour swallow the whole happiness of a human being. When I this morning left the inn where I had slept, how merrily I hummed my morning song and gazed at the rising sun! I revelled in idea at the table of joy, and indulged myself in the transporting anticipation of again beholding my good mother. Farewell, farewell forever, ye beauteous airy castles, ye lovely and alluring bubbles. At my return to my native country, the first object which meets my eyes is my dying mother—my first habitation a prison—and my first walk, to the place of execution! Oh, righteous God! have I deserved my fate? or dost thou visit the sins of the father on the son? Hold! hold! I am losing myself in a labyrinth. To endure with patience the afflictions ordained by Providence was the lesson taught me by my mother, and her share of afflictions has been large indeed! Oh, God! thou wilt repay us in another world for all the misery we undergo in this.

(Gazes toward heaven with uplifted hands.)

Enter Amelia, with a plate of meat and a bottle of wine.
(Turning to the side from whence the noise proceeds.) Who comes?

Amelia.—Good friend, I have brought you some refreshment. You are hungry and thirsty, I dare say.

Fred.—Oh, no!

Ama.—There is a bottle of old wine and a little cold meat. I have often heard my father say that this wine is a real cordial.

Fred.—Accept my warmest thanks, fair generous unknown. This bottle of wine is to me a most valuable present. Oh, hasten, hasten, gentle, benevolent lady! Send some one with this bottle to the neighboring village. Close to the public-house stands a small cottage, in which lies a sick woman. To her give this wine, if she be still alive. (Returns the wine.) Away! Away! I beseech you. Dear, amiable being, save my mother, and you will be my guardian angel.

Ama.—(Much affected.) Good man! you are not a villain, not a murderer—are you?

Fred.—Heaven be thanked I still deserve that you, good lady, should thus interest yourself in my behalf.

Ama.—I'll go, and send another bottle of wine to your mother. Keep this for yourself. (Going.)

Fred.—Allow me but one more question. Who are you, lovely, generous creature, that I may name you in my prayers to the Almighty?

Ama.—My father is Baron Wildenhain, the owner of this estate.

Fred.—Just heavens!

Ama.—What is the matter?

Fred.—(Shuddering.) And the man whom I attacked to-day—

Ama.—Was my father.

Fred.—My father!

Ama.—He quite alarms me. (Runs out.)

Fred.—(Repeating the words in most violent agitation.) Was my father! Eternal Justice! thou dost not slumber. The

man against whom I raised my arm to-day was—my father! In another moment I might have been a parricide! Hoo! an icy coldness courses through my veins. My hair bristles toward heaven. A mist floats before my eyes. I cannot breathe. (Sinks into the chair. A pause.) How the dread idea ranges in my brain! What clouds and vapors dim my sight, seeming to change their forms each moment as they pass! And if fate had destined he should perish thus, if I had perpetrated the desperate deed—whose, all-righteous Judge! whose would have been the guilt! Wouldst thou not thyself have armed the son to avenge on his unnatural father the injuries his mother had sustained? Oh, Zadig! (Sinks into meditation. A pause.) But this lovely, good, angelic creature who just left me—What a new sensation awakes in my bosom! This amiable being is my sister! But that animal—that coxcomb who was with my father in the field—is he my brother? Most probably. He is the only heir to these domains, and seems, as often is the case on such occasions, a spoilt child, taught from infancy to pride himself on birth and on the wealth he one day will inherit, while I—his brother—and my hapless mother—are starving!

Enter Pastor.

Pastor.—Heaven bless you!

Fred.—And you, sir! If I may judge by your dress, you are a minister of the church, and consequently a messenger of peace. You are welcome in both capacities.

Pas.—I wish to be a messenger of peace to your soul, and shall not use reproaches. You are in the hands of a man whose sentiments are noble, who honors your filial affection, compassionates your mournful situation and sincerely forgives what has happened to-day. You are at liberty. He sent me hither to announce this, and to release you from confinement with the exhortation of a parent, with the admonition of a brother.

Fred.—What is the name of this generous man?

Pas.—Baron Wildenhain.

Fred.—Wildenhain! (Affecting to call some circumstance to mind.) Did he not formerly live in Franconia?

Pas.—He did. At the death of his wife, a few weeks since, he removed to this castle.

Fred.—His wife is dead, then? And the amiable young lady who was here a few minutes since is his daughter, I presume?

Pas.—She is.

Fred.—And the young sweet-scented beau is his son?

Pas.—He has no son.

Fred.—(Hastily.) Yes—he has. (Recollecting himself.) I mean the one who was in the field with him to-day.

Pas.—Oh! he is not his son.

Fred.—(Aside.) Thank heaven!

Pas.—Only a visitor from town.

Fred.—I thank you for the little intelligence you have been kind enough to communicate. I have now only to make one request. Conduct me to Baron Wildenhain, and procure me, if possible, a private conversation with him. I wish to thank him for his generosity, and will not trouble him many minutes; but if he be in company, I shall not be able to speak so openly as I wish.

Pas.—Follow me.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE—A room in the castle.

The Baron is seated and smoking a pipe. Amelia is standing at his side, in conversation with him. The Count is stretched upon the sofa, lazily taking snuff and holding a smelling-bottle to his nose.

Baron.—No, no, Amelia, don't think of it. Toward evening, when it is cooler, we may perhaps take a walk together to see the sick woman.

Amc.—But as it is so delightful to do good, why should it be done through a servant? Charity is a pleasure, and we are surely not too high in rank to enjoy pleasure.

Bar.—Pshaw! who said anything about rank? That was a silly remark, and I could be angry at you for it. I tell you I have sent to the cottage, and the woman is better. Toward

evening we will take a walk to the village, and the Pastor, no doubt, will accompany us.

Ame.—(Satisfied.) Well, if you think so——

(Seats herself and begins to work.)

Bar.—It will be agreeable to you, too, Count, I hope? I dare say you will be gratified.

Count.—Je n'en doute pas, mon Colonel. Mademoiselle Amélie's douceur et bonté d'ame will charm me. But I hope the person's disorder is not epidemical. At all events, I am in possession of a vinaigre incomparable, which is a certain preventive.

Bar.—Take it with you, then, Count; for I advise you to go, by all means. There is no better preventive against ennui than the reviving sight of a fellow-creature grateful for the assistance by which she has been rescued from death.

Count.—Ennui, said you? Ah, mon Colonel, how could ennui find its way to a place inhabited by Mademoiselle?

Bar.—You are very polite, my lord. Amelia, don't you thank the Count?

Ame.—I thank your lordship.

Count.—(Bowing.) Don't mention it, I beg.

Bar.—But, Count, pray, have you resided much in France?

Count.—Ah, mon Colonel, don't refer to that subject, I beseech you. My father, the barbare, was guilty of a terrible sottise. He refused me a thousand louis d'ors, which I had destined for that purpose. I was there a few months, to be sure—I have seen that land of ecstasy, and should perhaps have been there still, in spite of le barbare my father, had not a disagreeable circumstance——

Bar.—(Sarcastically.) An affaire d'honneur, I presume?

Count.—Point de tout. A cavalier could find no honneur in the country. You have heard of the revolution there. You must—for all Europe speaks of it. Eh bien! Imaginez vous. I was at Paris and happened to be passing the palais royal, not knowing of anything that had occurred. Tout d'un coup, I found myself surrounded by a crowd of greasy tatterdemalions! One pushed me on this side—another on that—a third

pinched me—a fourth thrust his fist into my face. "What do you mean?" cried I. "How dare you treat me thus?" The mob, mon Colonel, grew still more unruly, and abused me because I had not a cockade in my hat—entendez vous? a national cockade. "Je suis un Comte du Saint Empire!" cried I. What was the consequence? The fellows beat me, foi d'honnête homme. They absolutely beat me; and a filthy Poissarde gave me a blow on the cheek. Nay, some began to shout, "A la lanterne!" What do you say to this, mon Colonel? What would you have done à ma place? I threw myself into my post-chaise and decamped as speedily as possible. Voila tout! It is an histoire facheuse; yet still I must regret that I did not enjoy more of the moments délicieuses which I tasted in that capitale du monde. But this every one must say—this every one must allow—the savoir vivre, the formation and the pli which is observable in me, are perfectly French, perfectly à la mode de Paris.

Bar.—Of that I am not able to form any judgment; but your language is a good deal Frenchified.

Count.—Ah, mon Colonel! what a high compliment you pay me!

Bar.—I beg you will consider it such.

Count.—All my care and anxiety, then, have not been à pure perte. For five years I have taken all possible pains to forget my native langue. For, Miss Amelia, is it not altogether devoid of grace, and not supportable in any respect, except when it proceeds from your lovely lips? What an eternal gurgling it causes in the throat! à tout moment must one stammer and hesitate. It does not flow in French meanders. Par example: If I want to make une déclaration d'amour, why, of course, I should wish to produce a chef d'œuvre of eloquence. Entendez vous? Hélas! Scarcely have I spoken a douzaine of words, when my tongue turns here—then there—first on this side—then on that. My teeth chatter pêle mêle against each other; and, in short, if I were not immediately to add a few French words, in order to bring everything into proper order, I should run the risk of absolutely losing the faculties of speech forever. And how can this be otherwise? We have no génies célèbres to refine the taste. To be sure, there are Germans who

pique themselves on gout, on lecture, on belles lettres. There's one Monsieur Wieland, who has acquired some degree of renommée by a few old tales which he has translated from the mille et une nuits, but still the original is French.

Bar.—But Zounds! Count, why are you every moment taking snuff, and holding that smelling-bottle to your nose? and why, I should like to know, must you drench your clothes and my sofa with lavender water? You have so completely scented the room that a stranger might imagine he was entering the shop of a French milliner.

Count.—Pardonnez, mon Colonel; the smoke of tobacco is quite insupportable. My nerves are most sensibly affected by it, and my clothes must be exposed to the open air for at least a month. I assure you, mon Colonel, my hair, even my hair, catches the infectious vapor. It is a shocking custom, but we must forgive it in the messieurs de militaire, who can have no opportunity, en campagne, of associating with the beau monde and learning the manners of the haut ton. But really I find it impossible to endure this horrible smell. Vous m'excuserez, mon Colonel. I must hasten into the open air, and change my clothes. Adieu, jusqu' au revoir. (Exit.)

Bar.—Well, heaven be praised, I have discovered a method of driving this creature away when I am tired of his frivolous conversation!

Ame.—Dear father, I should not like to marry him.

Bar.—Nor should I like him to be my son.

Ame.—(Who evidently shows that she has something on her mind.) I can't endure him. Yet—(after a pause)—I must own I should like to be married.

Bar.—You shall.

Ame.—(After a pause.) Why does not our Pastor marry?

Bar.—You must ask himself that question.

Ame.—(After another pause, during which she rivets her eyes on her work.) He likes me.

Bar.—I am glad of it.

Ame.—I like him, too.

Bar.—That is but just.

Ame.—(After another pause.) I believe, if you were to offer him my hand, he would not refuse it.

Bar.—That I believe, too.

Ame.—And I would obey you willingly.

Bar.—(Beginning to be more attentive.) How! Are you in earnest?

Ame.—Yes.

Bar.—Ha! Ha! Ha! Well! we will see.

Ame.—(Cheerfully raising her head.) Are you in earnest, father?

Bar.—No.

Ame.—(Dejected.) No?

Bar.—No, Amelia, this cannot be. To play such romantic tricks as Abelard and Eloise, Saint Preux and Julia, will never do. Besides, our Pastor is too honorable to have any such thoughts.

Ame.—You are his benefactor.

Bar.—At least he esteems me in that light.

Ame.—Surely, then, it would be honorable to make the daughter of his benefactor happy.

Bar.—But suppose the daughter is a child, who to-day burns with desire to possess a doll, which to-morrow she will throw away with disgust?

Ame.—Oh, I am not such a child.

Bar.—Amelia, let me explain this. A hundred fathers would, in my situation, tell you that, as you are of noble extraction, you must marry a nobleman; but I do not say so. I will not sacrifice my child to any prejudice. A woman never can obtain merit by rank, and has therefore no right to be proud of it.

Ame.—Well, and therefore——

Bar.—And therefore I should say, "Marry the Pastor, with all my heart, if you can't find among our young nobility any one whose mental and personal endowments correspond with your ideas." But of these there are certainly several—perhaps many. You have as yet had no opportunities of seeing them;

but next winter we will remove to town, and at some ball or other place of amusement you will no doubt meet with one adapted to your taste.

Ame.—Oh, no. I must first become intimately acquainted with a man, and may perhaps be then deceived; but I know our Pastor well—I have known him long: I am as perfectly acquainted with his heart as with my catechism.

Bar.—Amelia, you have never yet felt the influence of love. The Pastor has been your instructor, and you mistake the warmth of your gratitude for love, not knowing what it really is.

Ame.—You explained it to me this morning.

Bar.—Did I? Well, and my questions?

Ame.—Applied exactly to our Pastor. I could have fancied you were acquainted with every sensation of my heart.

Bar.—Indeed! Hem!

Ame.—Yes, my dear father; I love, and am beloved.

Bar.—Beloved! Has he told you this?

Ame.—Yes.

Bar.—Shame on him! He has not acted a proper part.

Ame.—Oh, if you knew how I surprised him——

Bar.—You him!

Ame.—He came, by your command, to converse with me respecting the Count, and I told h'm I would not marry the Count.

Bar.—But him?

Ame.—Yes.

Bar.—You are very candid, I must confess. And what did he answer?

Ame.—He talked a great deal about my rank, my family and my duty to you. In short, he wanted to persuade me not to think of him any more; but my heart would not be persuaded.

Bar.—That was noble in him. He will, therefore, not say anything to me upon the subject.

Ame.—No. He declared he should find that impossible.

Bar.—So much the better. I may, then, be supposed to know nothing of the matter.

Ame.—But I told him I would mention it to you.

Bar.—So much the worse! I am placed in a very awkward situation.

Ame.—And now I have mentioned it—the tears come into my eyes.

Bar.—(Turning away.) Suppress them.

(Amelia, after a pause, rises and stoops as if in search of something.)

What are you seeking?

Ame.—I have lost my needle.

Bar.—(Pushes his chair back and stoops to assist her.) It cannot have flown far.

Ame.—(Approaches and falls on his neck.) My good father!

Bar.—What now?

Ame.—This one request.

Bar.—Let me go. You make my cheeks wet with your tears.

Ame.—I shall never love any other man—I shall never be happy with any other man.

Bar.—Pshaw! Be a good girl, Amelia, and banish these childish fancies. (Touches her cheek.) Sit down again. We will have some further conversation on this subject at another time. You are not in so very great a hurry, I hope; for affairs of such moment require deliberation. The knot of wedlock is tied in a moment, but the married state endures for years. Many a girl who shed a tear because she might not marry the object of her affections sheds a million when she has surmounted all difficulties and obtained him. You have now shaken the burden from your heart, and your father bears it for you—for his beloved Amelia. Time will probably heal this slight scratch; but if not—why, you yourself shall fix upon a surgeon.

Ame.—(Seats herself again, and resumes her work with the appearance of heartfelt gratitude.) My dear, good father!

Bar.—Aye, truly; if your mother had been alive, you would not have escaped so easily. She would have dwelt, as usual, upon the sixteen people whom she called her ancestors.

Enter Pastor.

Bar.—Ha! I am glad you are come.

Pastor.—In compliance with your desire, my lord, I have released the young man from his prison. He waits in the ante-chamber, and wishes to express his gratitude in person.

Bar.—I am glad to hear it. I must not send him away empty-handed. It would have the appearance of half a kindness.

Pas.—He begs to be allowed a private interview.

Bar.—Private! Why?

Pas.—He says he shall be confused in the presence of witnesses. Perhaps, too, he wants to make some discovery which weighs heavy on his mind.

Bar.—Well! with all my heart! Go, Amelia, and stay with the Pastor in the ante-chamber. I wish to have a little conversation with you both afterward. (Exit Amelia.)

(The Pastor opens the door, beckons to Frederick that he may come, and exit.)

Enter Frederick.

Go, young man, and heaven's blessing be with you! I have sent to your mother, and find she is better. For her sake I pardon you; but take care you do not again commit such an offense. Robbery is but a bad trade. There is a louis-d'or for you. Endeavor to earn an honest livelihood; and if I hear that you are sober, diligent and honest, my doors and my purse shall not be shut to you in future. Now go, and heaven be with you!

Frederick.—(Takes the louis-d'or.) You are a generous man, liberal in your charity and not sparing of good advice. But allow me to beg another and a still greater favor. You are a man of large property and influence. Procure me justice against an unnatural father.

Bar.—How so? Who is your father?

Fred.—(With great asperity.) A man of consequence; lord of a large domain; esteemed at court; respected in town; beloved by his peasants; generous, upright and benevolent.

Bar.—And yet allows his son to be in want?

Fred.—And yet allows his son to be in want.

Bar.—Why, yes; for a very good reason, I dare say. You have probably been a libertine and squandered large sums at a gaming-table; or on some mistress, and your father has thought it advisable to let you follow the drum for a couple of years. Yes, yes. The drum is an excellent remedy for wild young rakes; and if you have been one of this description, your father has, in my opinion, acted very wisely.

Fred.—You are mistaken, my lord. My father does not know me; has never seen me; for he abandoned me while I was in my mother's womb.

Bar.—What?

Fred.—The tears of my mother are all the inheritance he bestowed upon me. He has never inquired after me—never concerned himself respecting me.

Bar.—That is wrong. (Confused.) Very wrong.

Fred.—I am a natural son. My poor, deluded mother educated me amidst anxiety and sorrow. By the labor of her hands she earned as much as enabled her, in some degree, to cultivate my mind; and I therefore think I might be a credit to a father. But mine willingly renounces the satisfaction and the pleasures of a parent, and his conscience leaves him at ease respecting the fate of his unfortunate child.

Bar.—At ease! If his conscience be at ease in such a situation, he must be a hardened wretch indeed.

Fred.—Having attained an age at which I could provide for myself, and wishing no longer to be a burden to my indigent mother, I had no resource but this coat. I enlisted into a volunteer corps—for an illegitimate child cannot obtain a situation under any tradesman.

Bar.—Unfortunate young man!

Fred.—Thus passed my early years, in the bustle of a military life. Care and sorrow are the companions of maturer

years. To the thoughtless youth nature has granted pleasure, that he may strengthen himself by the enjoyment of it, and thereby be prepared to meet the care and sorrow which await him. But the pleasures of my youth have been stripes; the dainties I have feasted on have been coarse bread and clear water. Yet, what cares my father? His table is sumptuously covered, and to the scourge of conscience he is callous.

Bar.—(Aside.) His words pierce to my heart.

Fred.—After a separation of five years from my mother, I returned to-day, feasting on the visions of anticipated bliss. I found her a beggar on the highway. She had not tasted food for four-and-twenty hours. She had no straw to rest her head upon — no roof to protect her from the inclemency of the weather — no compassionate fellow-creature to close her eyes — no spot to die upon. But what cares my father for all this? He has a stately castle and reposes upon swelling beds of down; and when he dies, the Pastor, in a funeral sermon, will descant upon his numerous Christian virtues.

Bar.—(Shudders.) Young man, what is your father's name?

Fred.—That he abused the weakness of an innocent female, and deceived her by false vows; that he gave life to an unfortunate being, who curses him; that he has driven his son almost to the commission of parricide — oh, these are mere trifles, which on the day of retribution may be paid for by this paltry piece of gold!

(Throws the louis-d'or at the Baron's feet.)

Bar.—(Almost distracted.) Young man, what is your father's name?

Fred.—Baron Wildenhain!

(The Baron strikes his forehead with both hands, and stands rooted to the spot. Frederick proceeds in most violent agitation.)

In this house, perhaps in this very room, did you beguile my hapless mother of her virtue, and beget me for the sword of the executioner. And now, my lord, I am not free—I am your prisoner—I will not be free—I am a robber. Loudly I proclaim I am a robber. You shall deliver me over to justice. You shall

accompany me to the scaffold. You shall hear the priest in vain attempting to console me and inspire my soul with hope. You shall hear me, in the anguish of despair, curse my unnatural father. You shall stand close to me when my head is severed from my body, and my blood—your blood—shall beam on your garments.

Bar.—Hold! Hold!

Fred.—And when you turn away with horror from this spectacle, you shall behold my mother at the foot of the scaffold, and hear her breathe her last convulsive sigh.

Bar.—Hold, inhuman as thou art.

Enter Pastor, hastily.

Pastor.—What means this? I heard you speak with violence, young man. Surely you have not dared—

Fred.—Yes. I have dared, worthy Pastor, to assume your office, and make a sinner tremble. (Pointing to the Baron.) Look there! Thus, after one-and-twenty years, is licentious conduct punished. I am a robber, sir, a murderer; but what I feel at this moment is ecstasy compared to his sensations. Look at him. Remorse and anguish rend his very heartstrings. I go to deliver myself into the hands of justice, and appear in another world a bloody witness against that man. (Exit.)

Pas.—For heaven's sake! what means this? I do not comprehend—

Bar.—He is my son! he is my son! Away, my friend! Lend me your aid at this dreadful moment. Away to the sick woman in the village! Francis will direct you to the cottage. Hasten, I beseech you.

Pas.—But what shall I—

Bar.—Oh, heavens! your heart must instruct you how to act. (Exit Pastor.) Have I lost my senses? (Holding his head.) Or am I dreaming? No. I have a son—a worthy, noble youth; and as yet I have not clasped him in my arms—as yet I have not pressed him to my heart. Matthew!

Enter a Gamekeeper.

Where is he?

Gamekeeper.—Who, my lord? The robber?

Bar.—Scoundrel! The young man who but this moment left me.

Game.—He is waiting to deliver himself up; we have sent for the constable, as he himself desired.

Bar.—Kick the constable out of doors if he comes, and let no one dare to lay a hand on the young man.

Game.—(Astonished.) Very well, my lord. (Going.)

Bar.—Holla! Matthew!

Game.—My lord!

Bar.—Conduct the young soldier into the green chamber over the dining-room, and attend on him if he be in want of anything.

Game.—The Count von der Mulde occupies that chamber, my lord.

Bar.—Turn the Count out, and send him to the devil.

(The Gamekeeper stands in doubt how to proceed, while the Baron walks to and fro.)

I want no son-in-law. I have a son—a son, who shall possess my estates and continue my name; a son, in whose arms I will die. Yes. I will repair the evils I have caused. I will not be ashamed of recognizing him. All my peasants, all my servants shall know that, though I could forget, I will not abandon my child. Matthew!

Game.—My lord!

Bar.—Conduct him hither. Request him to come hither, and let all my servants accompany him. (Exit Gamekeeper.) How strange are my sensations! My blood courses through my veins so rapidly that I feel my pulse beat from head to foot. How little do I deserve the bliss which is to-day my lot!

Enter Frederick, surrounded by a crowd of servants.

He comes! Quick, let me press thee to my heart!

(Rushes toward him and clasps him with fervor in his arms.)

My son!

ACT V.

SCENE—The room in the cottage as in the second act.

Wilhelmina, the Cottager and his Wife are discovered.

Enter Pastor.

Pastor.—God be with you, good people!

Cottager and Wife.—Good-day to you, sir!

Cot.—We are glad to see you.

Wife.—(Wipes a chair with her apron.) Pray sit down.

Cot.—It is a warm day. Shall I fetch you a draught of beer?

Wife.—Or a couple of mellow pears?

Pas.—I thank you, good people, but I am not thirsty. You have a visitor, I perceive.

Cot.—Yes, sir; a poor woman who is very weak and ill. I found her on the highroad.

Pas.—Heaven will reward you for assisting her.

Cot.—That it has already done, sir; for my wife and I never were more happy since we were married than we are to-day. Eh, Rachel? (Offering his hand.)

Wife.—Yes, that we are. (They shake hands.)

Pas.—(To Wilhelmina.) Who are you, good woman?

Wilhelmina.—I! Alas! (In a whisper.) If we were alone—

Pas.—(To Cottager.) Be so kind, honest John, as to let me have a little private conversation with this good woman.

Cot.—To be sure. Do you hear, Rachel? Come.

(Exeunt Cottager and Wife.)

Pas.—Now we are alone.

Wil.—Before I confess to you who I am, and who I was, allow me to ask a few questions. Are you a native of this country?

Pas.—No. I was born in Franconia.

Wil.—Were you acquainted with the venerable pastor who was your predecessor?

Pas.—No.

Wil.—You are totally ignorant, then, of my unhappy story, and mere accident has brought you hither?

Pas.—If in you I find the person whom I suspect and whom I long have sought, your story is not quite unknown to me.

Wil.—Whom you suspect and whom you long have sought! Who commissioned you to do this?

Pas.—A man who sincerely sympathizes in your distresses.

Wil.—Indeed! Oh, sir, tell me quickly whom you suspect to have discovered in me.

Pas.—Wilhelmina Boetcher.

Wil.—Yes. I am the unfortunate, deluded Wilhelmina Boetcher. And the man who sympathizes so sincerely in my distress is—Baron Wildenhain; the man who robbed me of my virtue, murdered my father, and for twenty years has exposed me and his child to misery. All this he believes he can to-day atone for by a purse of gold. (Draws out the purse.) Whatever may be your intention in coming hither, sir, whether it be to humble me, assist me or send me beyond the borders, that the sight of me may not reproach the libertine, I have but one request to make. Take back this purse to him who sent it. Tell him my virtue was not sold for gold. Tell him my peace of mind cannot be bought with gold. Tell him my father's curse cannot be removed from me by gold. Say that Wilhelmina, poor, starving and in a beggar's rags, still scorns to accept a favor from the hands of her seducer. He despised my heart—I despise his money. He trampled upon me—I trample upon his money. (Throws the purse on the earth with violence.) But he shall be left to revel as heretofore. The sight of me shall not be an interruption to his pleasures. As soon as I have in some degree recovered my strength, I will forever quit this place, where the name of Wildenhain and the grave of my father bow me to the ground. Tell him, too, I knew not that he was returned from Franconia and was in this neighborhood, for he may fancy I came hither in search of him. Oh, let him not fancy that! (Breathing with difficulty.) Now,

sir, you see that your presence, and the subject to which your visit led me, have exhausted my strength. I know not what I can say more. I know not, indeed, what more can be required of me by him who sent you. (With indignation.) But yes; it may, perhaps, have occurred to his lordship that he once promised me marriage; that on his knees he called the Almighty to witness his vow, and pledged his honor to fulfill it. Ha! Ha! Ha! Tell him not to discompose himself on that account. I have long since forgotten it.

Pas.—I have allowed you to proceed without interruption, that I might learn your sentiments with respect to the Baron, and your general way of thinking. Unprepared, as you must have been, for a conversation with me, your full heart has overflowed, and I am convinced you have not used any dissimulation. I therefore rejoice to find you a noble woman, worthy of every reparation which a man of honor can make. I rejoice, too, in being able at once to remove an error which, perhaps, has in a great degree caused the asperity of your expressions. Had the Baron known that the sick woman in this cottage was Wilhelmina Boetcher, and had he then, instead of all consolation, sent her this purse, he would have deserved—to have been murdered by his own son. But no. This was not the case. Look at me. My profession demands confidence; but, setting that aside, I would not utter a falsehood. A mere accident made you the object of his charity, which he imagined he was exercising toward one unknown to him.

Wil.—How, sir! would you convince me that this present was the effect of mere accident? To one unknown to him he might have sent a guilder, or a dollar, but not a purse of gold.

Pas.—I grant that appearances are against my assertion, but the accident was of a peculiar nature. Your son—

Wil.—What of my son?

Pas.—Compose yourself. The Baron was affected by the way in which your son implored his charity.

Wil.—Charity! Did he implore the Baron's charity—his father's charity?

Pas.—Yes, but they did not know each other; and the mother, therefore, only received this present for the son's sake.

Wil.—They did not know each other! Where is my son?

Pas.—At the castle.

Wil.—And do they not yet know each other?

Pas.—They do; and I now appear here by command of the Baron, who sent me not to a sick woman, but to Wilhelmina Boetcher; not with money, but with a commission to do as my heart directed.

Wil.—Your heart! Oh, sir, do not lend that cruel man the sensations of your heart. But, yes—be it so. I will forget what I have endured on his account, if he will console me by his conduct toward Frederick. As a woman I will pardon him, if he will deserve a mother's thanks. How did he receive my boy?

Pas.—I left him in most violent agitation. It was the very moment of discovery, and nothing was resolved upon. But doubtless, while we are now in conversation, the son is in his father's arms. I am convinced by the goodness of his heart—

Wil.—The goodness of his heart again! Heavens! How can this man's heart be so suddenly altered? After having been for twenty years deaf to the voice of nature—

Pas.—You wrong him. Listen to me before you decide. Many an error seems, on a superficial view, most infamous; but did we know every circumstance which tended to excite it, every trifle which had an imperceptible effect in producing it, our opinion would be very different. Could we accompany the offender from step to step, instead of seeing, as in the present instance, only the first, the tenth and twentieth, we should often pardon where we now condemn. Far be it from me to defend the Baron's conduct toward you; but surely I may maintain that a good man, by committing one bad action, does not on that account entirely forfeit his claim to the title of a good man. Forgive me if I appear too talkative; and let me now tell you, in a few words, the story of the Baron since your separation. At that time he loved you most sincerely, and nothing but the dread of his rigid mother prevented the fulfillment of his promise. But he was summoned into the field, where he was dangerously wounded and made a prisoner. For a year he was confined to his bed. He could not write, and received no intelligence of you. Thus did the impression of your image on his mind first become weaker. He had been

conducted from the field of battle to a neighboring castle, the owner of which was a worthy nobleman who possessed a large fortune and a beautiful daughter. This lady became enamored of the young officer, and seldom left his couch. She attended on him with the affection of a sister and shed many tears for his fate, which were not unobserved. Gratitude knit the band which death rent asunder but a few months since. Thus the impression of your image was erased from his mind. He did not return to his native land, but purchased an estate in Franconia, to the cultivation of which he devoted his time. He became a husband and a father. None of the objects which surrounded him reminded him of you, and thus the recollection of you slumbered till care, anxiety and domestic discord awoke it and embittered his existence; for, when it was too late, he discovered in his wife a proud, imperious being, who had been spoilt in her infancy, who always thwarted him, always insisted on being right, and seemed only to have rescued him from death in order to have the pleasure of tormenting him. At that time an accident led me to his house. He became attached to me, made me the instructor of his daughter, and soon after trusted me with his confidence. Oh, how often has he pressed my hand in violent emotion to his heart and said, "This woman revenges on me the wrongs of the innocent Wilhelmina." How often has he cursed all the wealth which his wife had brought him, and sighed for a less splendid but far happier lot in your arms! When, at length, the old pastor of Wildenhain died, and he bestowed the benefice on me, the first expression which accompanied the gift was, "There, my friend, you will gain some tidings of my Wilhelmina." Every letter which I afterward received from him contained this exclamation: "Still no account of Wilhelmina!" I have those letters, and can let you see them. It was not in my power to discover where you dwelt. Fate had higher views respecting you, and prevented it until to-day.

Wil.—Your description has excited in my breast emotions which my heart acknowledges to be conviction. But how can this end? What will become of me?

Pas.—The Baron, I must own, has never told me what he meant to do in case he ever found you; but your sufferings

demand reparation, and I know but one way in which this reparation can be made. Noble-minded woman, if your strength will allow it, accompany me. The road is good, and the distance short.

Wil.—I accompany you! Appear before him in these rags!

Pas.—Why not?

Wil.—Do I wish to reproach him?

Pas.—Exalted being! Come to my house. My sister shall supply you with clothes, and my carriage shall take us to the castle.

Wil.—And shall I see my Frederick again?

Pas.—Rest assured you will.

Wil.—(Rising.) Well! For his sake I will undergo the painful meeting. He is the only branch on which my hopes still blossom—all the rest are withered and destroyed. But where are the good cottagers? I must take leave of them and thank them.

Pas.—(Takes up the purse and goes to the door.) Neighbor John!

Enter Cottager and his Wife.

Cottager.—Here I am.

Wife.—Well, you can stand again, I see, thank heaven!

Pas.—Yes, good people. I shall take her with me. I can accommodate her better than you, though you have done what you could.

Cot.—Why, to be sure, we can give her no more than we have, and that is but little.

Wife.—But she is very welcome to that.

Pas.—You have acted like worthy people. There! take that as a reward for your kindness.

(Offers the purse to the Cottager, who puts his hands together before him, twirls his thumbs, looks at the money, and shakes his head.)

Well! won't you take it?

(Offers it to his Wife, who plays with the string of her apron, looks askance at the money, and shakes her head.)

What means this?

Cot.—Sir, don't be offended, but we don't choose to be paid for doing our duty.

Wife.—(Looking toward heaven.) You have often told us we should be paid hereafter.

Pas.—(Laying his hands on their shoulders, much affected.) You will. God bless you!

(Wilhelmina wipes her eyes, leans on the Pastor's arm, and supports herself on the other side with a stick.)

Pas.—God be with you!

Cot.—(Taking off his cap and scraping.) Good-day to you, sir!

Both.—And we hope we shall soon see you again.

(They attend the Pastor and Wilhelmina to the door.)

SCENE—An apartment in the castle.

The Baron is seated on a sofa, exhausted by various emotions. Frederick stands leaning over him and pressing his father's hand between his own.

Baron.—So you have really seen some service? You know the smell of gunpowder? I'll stake my head against a turnip that if you had been Frederick von Wildenhain, you would have been spoiled by your father and mother; but as Frederick Boetcher, you are become a fine-spirited lad. This has, to be sure, cost you many an uneasy hour. Your juvenile days have not been very comfortable. Well! Well! You shall feel an alteration for the better, Frederick. I will legitimize you. Yes, my boy, I will openly acknowledge you as my only son and heir. What say you to this, eh?

Frederick.—And my mother?

Bar.—She shall be well provided for, too. Do you think your father is poor? Don't you know that Wildenhain is one of the best estates in the country? Yes, and but a mile from it lies Wellendorf, another neat place; and in Franconia I obtained with my wife (heaven rest her soul!) three large manors.

Fred.—But my mother?

Bar.—Well, I was just going to say that she may reside where she chooses. If she will not live in Franconia, why, she may remain at Wellendorf. There is a neat little house, neither too large nor too small; an excellent garden; a charming prospect; in short, the place is a little paradise. She shall have everything she wants, and a happy old age shall smooth the furrows which the misfortunes of youth have plowed in her face.

Fred.—(Retreating a few steps.) How!

Bar.—Yes; and I'll tell you what, my boy. It is but a short distance from the castle. If, when we rise in a morning, we feel disposed to visit your mother, we need but order a couple of horses to be saddled, and in an hour we shall be with her.

Fred.—Indeed! And what name is my mother to bear when she lives there?

Bar.—(Embarrassed.) How?

Fred.—Is she to be considered as your housekeeper or your mistress?

Bar.—Pshaw! Pshaw!

Fred.—I understand you. I will withdraw, my father, and give you time to consider well before you finally resolve on anything. But one thing I must irrevocably swear by all that is dear and sacred to me: My fate is inseparable from that of my mother. Frederick von Wildenhain and Wilhelmina von Wildenhain, or Frederick Boetcher and Wilhelmina Boetcher!

(Exit.)

Bar.—Zounds! What does he want? He surely does not expect me to marry his mother. No, no, young man; you must not dictate to your father how he is to act. I was flattering myself with the idea of having arranged everything very comfortable, was as happy as a king from having relieved my conscience of a heavy burden, was breathing more freely than for many years, when this boy throws a stone at my feet and wants to make me stumble over it again. No, no. Friend conscience, I thank heaven that I can address thee as a friend again. What thinkest thou to this? Thou art silent. But no. Methinks thou art still not completely satisfied.

Enter Pastor.

Ha! my friend, you come most opportunely. My conscience and I are involved in a suit, which must be determined in the court where you preside.

Pastor.—Your conscience is right.

Bar.—Hold! Hold! You are deciding before you know the merits of the case. Your sentence is partial.

Pas.—No. Conscience is always right; for it never speaks until it is right.

Bar.—Indeed! But I am as yet ignorant whether it speaks or is silent. On such occasions a divine has a quicker ear than a layman. Listen to me. I will state the case in a few words. (Laying his hand on the Pastor's shoulder.) My friend, I have found my son, and a noble fellow he is—full of fire as a Frenchman, of pride as an Englishman, and of honor as a German. That apart; I mean to legitimize him. Am I not right?

Pas.—Perfectly.

Bar.—And his mother shall enjoy peace and comfort for the remainder of her life. I mean to settle my Wellendorf estate upon her. There she may live, alter it according to her own taste, revive in the happiness of her son, and grow young again amidst the gambols of her grandchildren. Am I not right?

Pas.—You are not.

Bar.—(Starting.) How! What should I do, then?

Pas.—Marry her.

Bar.—Yes. That is very likely, to be sure!

Pas.—Baron Wildenhain is a man who does nothing without a sufficient reason. I stand here as the advocate for your conscience, and expect you to produce your reasons, after which you shall hear mine.

Bar.—Zounds! Why, you would not wish me to marry a beggar?

Pas.—(After a pause.) Is that all you can advance?

Bar.—(At a loss.) No—not exactly—I have other reasons—several other—

Pas.—May I beg you to mention them?

Bar.—(Very much embarrassed.) I am a nobleman.

Pas.—Proceed.

Bar.—The world will ridicule me.

Pas.—Proceed.

Bar.—My relatives will shun me.

Pas.—Proceed.

Bar.—And—and—— (Very violently.) Zounds! I can't proceed.

Pas.—Then it is my turn to speak on the subject; but before I do this, allow me to ask a few questions. Did Wilhelmina, by coquetry or levity of conduct, first raise in you a wish to seduce her?

Bar.—No. She was always chaste and modest.

Pas.—Did it cause you any trouble to gain your point?

Bar.—Yes.

Pas.—Did you ever promise her marriage? (The Baron hesitates. The Pastor says, with great solemnity:) I repeat my question. Did you ever promise her marriage?

Bar.—Yes.

Pas.—And summoned God to witness that promise?

Bar.—Yes.

Pas.—You pledged your honor that you would fulfill this vow—did you not?

Bar.—(With impatience.) Yes, yes.

Pas.—Well, my lord, from your own confession it appears that the witness you called upon was God, who beheld you then, who beholds you now. The pledge you offered was your honor, which you must redeem, if you be a man of integrity. I now stand in your presence, impressed with the full dignity of my vocation. I shall speak to you as I would speak to the meanest of your peasants; for my duty commands it, and I will fulfill my duty should I even thereby forfeit your esteem. If, in the days of gay and thoughtless youth (when a man lives, as it were, only to enjoy the present moment), you seduced an innocent female, without considering what might be the conse-

quence; and if, when more advanced in years, you repented your youthful indiscretion and endeavored to make every reparation in your power, you are still a respectable man. But if a licentious youth, by wicked snares, has plunged a guiltless being into misery; has destroyed the happiness and innocence of a female to gratify a momentary passion; has, while intoxicated with his happiness, pledged his honor and sacrificed his conscience to his brutal desires, can he imagine reparation may be made by a paltry handful of gold which chance bestowed on him? Oh, such a wretch deserves—pardon my warmth, my lord. Once more I say you must fulfill your promise. You ought to do it, if you were a prince; for a prince, though he may be released by the State from the fulfillment of his vows, will never be released by his conscience. Therefore thank God that you are not a prince. . Thank God that it is in your power to purchase at so cheap a rate the most valuable of all treasures—peace of mind. In resolving to marry Wilhelmina you have not even any claim to merit; for this union will enhance your happiness. What a pity it is that it does not cost you any sacrifice—that your whole property is not dependent on it! Then might you have stepped forth and said: “I’ll marry Wilhelmina. Do I not act nobly?” But now, when she brings you a dowry larger than any princess could bestow, your peace of mind and an amiable son, now you can do nothing but exclaim: “Friend, wish me joy; I’ll marry Wilhelmina.”

Bar.—(Who, during the Pastor’s address, has alternately walked up and down the room in most violent agitation, and stood with eyes fixed on the earth, at one moment exhibiting marks of anger, at another of remorse, now approaches the Pastor with open arms, and presses him to his heart.) Friend, wish me joy; I’ll marry Wilhelmina.

Pas.—(Returning his embrace.) I do wish you joy.

Bar.—Where is she? You have seen her?

Pas.—She is in that room. That I might not excite curiosity, I conducted her thither through the garden.

Bar.—Well, then you shall marry us this very day.

Pas.—That cannot be. The union must not take place so soon, and must not be so private. All your tenantry witnessed Wilhelmina’s disgrace; they, therefore, ought to witness the

restoration of her honor. On three successive Sundays I will publish the bans. Do you agree to this?

Bar.—With all my heart.

Pas.—We will then celebrate the nuptials, and the whole village will participate in your happiness. Do you agree to this?

Bar.—Yes.

Pas.—Is the suit, then, at an end? Is your conscience silent?

Bar.—Still as a mouse. I only wish the first interview was over. I feel as much ashamed of first meeting Wilhelmina's eye as a thief when obliged to appear before the person whom he has defrauded.

Pas.—Be at ease. Wilhelmina's heart is the judge.

Bar.—And (why should I not confess it?) prejudices resemble wounds which, though as nearly healed as possible, smart when any alteration takes place in the weather. I—I am ashamed—of confessing all these circumstances—to my daughter—to the Count—to my servants. I wish it were over. I should not like to see Wilhelmina—I should not like to resign myself entirely to joy till I have explained everything to—Holla! Francis!

Enter a Gamekeeper.

Where are my daughter and the Count?

Gamekeeper.—In the dining-room, my lord.

Bar.—Tell them I shall be glad to see them here.

(Exit Gamekeeper.)

Stay with me, my worthy friend, lest the Count's insipidity should put me out of humor. I will tell him clearly and briefly what my opinion is, and if his senses be not entirely destroyed by the follies of France, he will order his horses to be put to his carriage, and—he may then drive with all his boxes of pomade to the devil.

Enter Amelia and the Count.

Count.—Nous voila vos ordres, mon Colonel. We have been enjoying a promenade delicieuse. Wildenhain is a paradise on earth, and possesses an Eve who resembles the mother of man-

kind. Nothing is wanting to complete this garden of Eden except an Adam, who, as we are told by mythologie, accepted with rapture the apple of death itself from her fair hand; and this Adam is found—yes, my lord, this Adam is found.

Bar.—Who is found? Frederick, but not Adam.

Count.—Frederick! Who is he?

Bar.—My son—my only son.

Count.—Comment? Your son! Mon père assured me you had no children except Mademoiselle.

Bar.—Your père could not know I had a son, because till within a few minutes I was myself ignorant of the circumstance.

Count.—Vous parlez des enigmes.

Bar.—In short, the young man who attacked us this morning in the field. You remember him, for you ran away from him quickly enough.

Count.—I have a confused recollection of having seen him. But proceed.

Bar.—Well, that very young man is my son.

Count.—He your son? Impossible!

Bar.—Yes, he.—(Apart to the Pastor.) I am really ashamed of confessing the truth even to that coxcomb.

Pas.—A man like you ashamed of such an animal as that!

Bar.—(Aloud.) He is my natural son. But that is of little consequence; for in two or three weeks I shall marry his mother, and shall break any man's bones who ridicules me for it. Yes, Amelia, you may stare. The boy is your brother.

Amc.—(Delighted.) Are you joking, or serious?

Count.—And who is his mother, mon Colonel? Is she of good extraction?

Bar.—She is—(To the pastor.) Pray answer him

Pas.—She is a beggar.

Count.—(Smiling.) Vous badinez.

Pas.—If you particularly wish to know her name, it is Wilhelmina Boetcher.

Count.—Boetcher! The family is quite unknown to me.

Bar.—Very likely. She belongs to the family of honest people, and that is unfortunately a very small one.

Count.—A mesalliance then?

Pas.—Generosity and integrity will be united with affection and fidelity. You may call that mesalliance if you please.

Count.—It really requires an *Œdipe* to unravel this mystery. Un fils naturel? A la bonne heure, mon Colonel! I have two natural children. There are moments in which instinct and a tempting girl are irresistible—in short, such things happen every day. Mais, mon Dieu! What attention should be paid to such creatures? Let them learn some business or other, and they are provided for. Mine shall be both friseurs.

Bar.—And mine shall be a nobleman, as well as heir to all the estates I possess.

Count.—Me voila stupefait. Miss Amelia, I must plead in your behalf. You are on the point of being ecrasée.

Ame.—Don't trouble yourself, my Lord.

Count.—La fille unique! L'unique heretiere!

Ame.—I shall still possess and inherit the affection of my father.

Bar.—Good Amelia! Right, my dear girl! Come hither and give me a kiss.—(Amelia flies into his arms.) Count, you will oblige me by leaving us for a few moments. We may, perhaps, have a scene here which will not suit your disposition.

Count.—De tout mon cœur! We understand each other. It is clair de lune, and I hope you will therefore allow me to return this evening to town.

Bar.—As you please.

Count.—A dire vrai, mon Colonel! I did not come hither in search of a voleur de grand chemin for my brother-in-law, or a guese for my mother-in-law.—(Skipping away.) Henri! Henri! (Exit.)

Bar.—(Still holding Amelia in his arms.) I breathe more freely. Now a word with you, my dear Amelia. Twenty years ago I basely seduced a poor girl and gave life to a child, who, till to-day, has been a prey to poverty and distress. The circumstance has weighed on my heart like a rock of granite. You have often observed that on a dreary evening, when I sat

in my arm-chair with my pipe in my mouth, and my eye fixed on the floor, I did not attend to you when you spoke to me, smiled at me or caressed me. I was then overpowered by the accusations of conscience, and felt that all my riches, that even you, my child, could not restore to me the blissful sensations of an honest man. Thanks be to Heaven, those sensations are restored to me—the causes of their absence, my wife and son, are restored to me. This worthy man feels—(Pointing to the Pastor)—and I feel—(Pointing to his heart)—it is my duty to acknowledge them as my wife and son. What think you?

Ame.—(Caressing him.)—Can my father ask?

Bar.—Will the loss be no affliction to you, if your father's peace of mind be purchased with it?

Ame.—What loss?

Bar.—You were my only child, and all my estates would—

Ame.—(Gently reproving him.) Hold, my father!

Bar.—You lose some valuable manors.

Ame.—For which my brother's affection will requite me.

Bar.—And mine. (Clasps her with fervor in his arms.)

Pas.—(Turning away.) And why not mine?

Bar.—(To the Pastor.) My friend, I am obliged to you for the conquest over one prejudice, to myself for the conquest over another. A man who, like you, is the friend and supporter of virtue, raises his profession to the highest pitch of human excellence—of human rank. If all your brethren resembled you, Christianity might be proud, indeed. You are a noble man—I am but a nobleman. If I be on the point of becoming more, I am obliged to you for the promotion. I owe you much. Amelia, will you pay the debt for me?

(Amelia gazes for a moment at her father, in doubt how to understand his words. He releases her hand, after leading her toward the Pastor, into whose arms she immediately flies.)

Pas.—(Astonished beyond all measure.) Heavens! my Lord!

Bar.—Say not a word on the subject.

Ame.—(Kissing him.) Silence! I know you love me—
(The Pastor releases himself from her embrace. Tears gush from his eyes. He attempts to speak, but is unable. He then approaches the Baron, seizes his hand, and is about to press it to his lips when the Baron withdraws it and clasps him in his arms. Amelia looks at them, and says:) How happy do I feel!

Bar.—(Releasing himself from the Pastor.) Zounds! I shall begin to shed tears. Let me endeavor to compose myself. A scene awaits me which will affect my heart still more than this. Well, my dear son, in a few moments all will be at an end, and the last beams of the setting sun will smile upon the happiest beings in nature's wide extended empire. Where is Wilhelmina?

Pas.—I will bring her hither.

(Going.)

Bar.—Stop! How strange are my sensations! Let me have another moment—let me compose myself.—(Walks to and fro, breathes with difficulty and looks several times toward the room into which the Pastor said he had conducted Wilhelmina.) She will come from that room! That was my mother's bedroom! Often have I seen her come from it. Often have I feasted on her fascinating smile. How shall I be able to endure her care-worn look? Frederick shall intercede in my behalf.—Where is he?—Holla!

Enter a Servant.

Where is my son?

Servant.—In his chamber, my Lord.

Bar.—Tell him he is wanted here.—(To the Pastor.) Go, then. My heart throbs most violently. Go, and conduct her hither.
(Exit Pastor.)

(The Baron looks toward the room which the Pastor has entered, and all the muscles of his countenance are contracted.)

Enter Wilhelmina, led by the Pastor.

Bar.—(Rushes into her arms. She sinks into his and nearly swoons. He and the Pastor place her in a chair, and

he kneels before her with his arm around her waist and her hand in his own.) *Wilhelmina!* Do you remember my voice?

Wilhelmina.—(In a weak and tender tone.) *Wildenhain!*

Bar.—Can you forgive me?

Wtl.—Can—I do.

Enter Frederick, hastily.

Frederick.—My mother's voice!—Ha!—Mother!—Father!—
(Throws himself on his knees at the other side of *Wilhelmina*,
and bends affectionately over both. The Pastor gratefully
raises his eyes toward Heaven, while *Amelia*, reclining on his
shoulder, wipes her eyes. The curtain falls.)

The End.

THE FATAL ERROR.

VERSIFIED FROM THE JAPANESE

BY

THOMAS RUSSELL HILLIER McCLATCHIE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNCILLOR.

KWANSUKÉ, a Servant.

PRELUDE.

Were a Japanese Rip Van Winkle to fall asleep in one of his native playhouses during an early act of a classic Japanese drama he might, upon awakening from his long sleep, find one of the later acts of that same interminable play still being enacted upon the stage. Then, too, altogether apart from length, it is questionable whether a truly characteristic Japanese drama translated in its entirety would prove interesting or even intelligible to the Western world. In fact, owing to there being no affinity between the Japanese and English languages, the task of translation offers innumerable, almost insuperable, obstacles; and as the standards of beauty and art differ so widely, it is practically impossible to adhere to the letter and convey the exact shade of meaning without often appearing ridiculous. The translator, evidently with a full realization of these difficulties, has not attempted a literal translation. The plan followed has been to select a few of the leading personages and to give an outline of those scenes only in which these particular characters appear, at all times adhering as closely as possible to the spirit rather than the letter of the play.

The *Fatal Error* is taken from the drama of *Kaga-Sodo* as performed at the Saruwaka-machi Theatre, Asakusa, Tokio, and is said to be founded on fact. The intrigues therein related are supposed to have actually occurred in the middle of the seventeenth century at

the castle-town of Kanazawa, the seat of the Maeda family, who were lords of the rich province Kaga, in which that town is situated. It is but fair to state, however, that the tale of the *Kaga-Sodo*, as represented on the stage, differs considerably from the real occurrences as recorded in Japanese historical annals. The play is one of the most popular produced upon the Nippon stage.

THE FATAL ERROR.

With a sorrowful face, and a mystified frown,
The Councillor wandereth up and adown;
There's a glance in his eye
That is plainly shimpai,
And the badge on his mantle is pulled all awry;
His chin is unshaven; on top of his pate
His queue draggles down in a sad, dirty state;
In the broad girdle laced
Round his corpulent waist
Are his swords in a fashion most slovenly placed,
With the short one inside, which, a child could descry,
Is a mode quite unworthy a true samurai;
His mien is dejected; o'ercome by his woe,
He looks more like a guy than a gallant karô!
And, in view of these symptoms, to think you're inclin'd
That a something doth trouble the Councillor's mind.
Yes, you're right, gentle reader; he cannot refuse
To admit that he's down with a fit of the blues;
And just here, I would pray
You'll permit me to say
That the question of color's quite strange in its way;
Thus, a man owns he's blue, but I've never yet seen
Any person so bold as confess himself green!—
"To return to our muttons" from this slight digression,
I'll tell you the cause of our worthy's depression:
If a man e'er had "blues," 'tis the case with our friend,
And, of course, there's a lady to blame in the end!

"Oh! alas for the day,"

Doth the Councillor say,

"When our late Kashiū Sama the good passed away!
 "While he lived, peace and plenty prevailed in our land,
 "And the peasants all blessed his beneficent hand;
 "Then officials were honest, then taxes were light,
 "Then our harvests were rich, and our prospects were bright,
 "And a tub of good saké was broached ev'ry night!
 "And we fancied—poor fools!—'twould be always the same,
 "As we bragged of our clan and our daimiō's fame:

"But, alas and alack!

"One fine day an attack

"Of sore sickness prostrated our lord on his back;
 "Some they swore it was kak'ke, some vowed 'twas from drink,
 "They were all of them wrong—for my own part, I think
 "Any fool could have seen with but half of an eye,
 "That the time had arrived for his lordship to die;
 "His last hour was at hand, he perceived without telling,
 "So at once set in order his household and dwelling;
 "He looked out for his heir a most charming young wife,
 "And then, greatly lamented, departed this life;
 "Full of years and of honors, he died without pain,
 "And was buried—and then, there commenced a new reign;
 "For his son (would that sad date could pass by unheeded!)
 "To his lands, titles, cash-box, and castle succeeded.

"Some few months passed away,

"And the Lady O Tei

"O'er our young chief's affections retained her first sway;
 "And so gentle, so kind, so devoted was she,
 "That of all the retainers no man could foresee
 "That the Lord and his Lady would e'er disagree.
 "Yet, ere long—how it happened I'm sure I can't tell—
 "The gay youth 'gainst her counsels began to rebel—
 "Paid attentions, in fact, to a frail singing girl,
 "Who ensnared his weak heart, set his brain in a whirl,
 "And so stole his affections completely away
 "From the wife of his bosom, poor Lady O Tei!
 "Till at last the enchantress, without more ado,
 "Made our lord bring her home as his wife Number Two!!

"Oh! ne'er can I forget that morn,
"The darkest day that e'er did dawn,
 "That viewed our chieftain's fall!
"When, faithless to his loving spouse,
"Forgetful of his plighted vows,
 "He sank in folly's thrall!
"Oh! would he ne'er had known the wile
"Of wanton Hidé's laughing smile,
 "Or seen her witching eye!
"Far better 'twere that, hushed his breath,
"And still his heart by friendly death,
 "He in the grave should lie!
"Yet the Lady O Hidé, I'll frankly concede,
"Is a damsel of marvelous beauty—indeed,
"There's a weird, supernatural loveliness glows
"From the crown of her head to the tips of her toes!
"E'en when I, an old man, first encountered her glance,
"I could feel my poor heart give a palpable dance;
"While the blood in my veins coursed with feverish heat,
 "Till I hardly could well
 "Have attempted to tell
"If I stood, at the time, on my head or my feet!
"Nay, I scarce think she's human; for ne'er have I seen
"Any maiden of parentage mortal whose mien
"Was at once so majestic, enchanting, alluring!
("I'm convinced she's a demon; the thing's past enduring!)
"Then that smile so bewitching, those luminous eyes!
("Oh, I'll swear she's a badger or fox in disguise!)
 "Yet—to think that that form,
 "Which an iceberg might warm,
"Should be that of a devil!—My eyes! what a storm
"Would have broke on my foolish, devoted old head,
"If so dire a suspicion in public I'd said!
"Yet the thing's past a doubt, from that sad, fatal day
"Our whole matsurigoto has gone to decay;
"While our hapless young lord by th' enchantress will linger;
("She can turn him with ease round her lily-white finger!)
"And, in view of these facts, and of signs not a few
"That dire mischief is brewing, what am I to do?

"For the peasants all say,
 "In a gloomy, stern way,
 "That they won't find the taxes they're ordered to pay;
 "I'm afraid of some ikki, I tremble with dread,
 "And I curse the enchantress—I would she were dead!"
 Here the puzzled karô,
 With a face full of woe,
 Shakes his head, blows his nose, and declares it's "no go,"
 Gives it up, and confesses, while heaving a sigh,
 'Tis a regular case of shikata ga nai!
 From behind the low hedge in the Councillor's rear,
 With a loud rustling noise, see! a form doth appear;
 And this form, as you yet more attentively scan,
 The proportions assumes of a handsome young man.
 The karô, at the sound,
 Gives a start—with a bound
 The youth springs o'er the hedge, quickly glances around
 To the right and the left—not a soul's in the street—
 So he sinks on his knees at the Councillor's feet!

"Hallo!—Kwansuké—you rascal, how dare you come here?
 "Why, I thought I dismissed you my service last year!"—
 "Oh! I pray, good my lord, you'll vouchsafe to give ear,
 "And to list to my tale,
 "For I'm sure I shan't fail
 "To explain my past conduct;"—his master turns pale;
 "Only fancy," thinks he, "what a dreadful mishap
 "If my threats should have chanced to be heard by this chap!
 "I'll just hark to his tale, without anger or scoff,
 "And, that done, I've no doubt I can soon 'bluff him off.'"
 So the Councillor here, as old Horace would tell us,
 "Ut iniquus (that means 'stubborn') mentis asellus,
 "Demittit auriculas" (that phrase can't hurt you)
 And, in fact, of "necessity dire" makes a virtue;
 His retainer looks up with an air of combined
 Joy and fear, clears his throat, and thus eases his mind:—
 "Words alone
 "Can't atone,
 "I most freely will own,
 "For my past misdemeanors—my faults I bemoan,

"And I would that whilst I in your household did stay
"More befitting behavior I'd tried to display;

"For I'm fully aware

"That my conduct while there

"Was by no means en règle, nor yet on the square.

"I disturbed the whole place with my riot and noise,

"For my fault was, in short, I was 'one of the boys;'

"And no matter what mischief the youngsters might brew,

"I was safe to be found at the head of the crew;

"There was no one so apt at concocting a hoax,

"Or at starting a 'sell,' or low, practical jokes;

"I'd dress up, for a lark,

"When it chanced to be dark,

"In a sheet, like a ghost, promenading the park,

"When I'd frighten the waiting maids out of their wits,

"And once drove the fat cook pretty nigh into fits;

"Till at last to yourself I once offered some 'slack,'

"For which you, most deservedly, gave me the sack!

"Thus dismissed in disgrace, I continued to roam,

"Cut by all my old chums, without shelter or home;

"Till at last I encountered a kindly old man

"Who had known me in youth,

"And who promised in truth

"To befriend me if I'd begin new—I began!

"I took service with him, and I've worked in his store,

("He's a dealer in dry goods) this twelvemonth and more;

"But I burn

"To return

"From this peddling concern

"To the life of a gentleman, once more to learn

"How to wield with precision the lance and the blade,

"In the stead of the cloth-yard that's used 'in the trade.'

"Oh! forgive me, kind master, forgive and forget

"All my former misdeeds, and I'll prove to you yet

"That your gracious beneficence largely can tend

"To assist me my reprobate ways to amend!"

"Well, well," says his ci-devant master, "tis true

"That I always had, Kwansuké, a liking for you;

"That your past life was wrong, there can be no denial,

"Yet I'll not refuse once more to give you a trial;
 "As I don't like to jump on a man when he's down,
 "I'll assist you to try and achieve some renown.
 "To insure true success there is nought, I've oft felt,
 "Like red gold in the purse, and sharp steel at the belt;
 "You've just spoken of wielding the blade and the lance—
 "Take this dirk, then, and purse—these will give you a chance
 "To distinguish yourself by some valorous deed,
 "By some gallant tegara—and then, as the meed
 "Of your vict'ry, I'd fain
 "Treat the past with disdain,
 "And install you, thus proved, in my service again."

"Thanks! noble sir!" doth Kwansuké cry,
 "For this thy kind good-will;
 "I'll do some deed of merit high,
 "To prove I'm worthy still;
 "For Kwansuké's breast is bold and leal,
 "Of that be not afraid;
 "His heart is true as the burnished steel
 "Of a Masamuné blade!"

With a low genuflection, the gifts he doth seize,
 Holds them up to his forehead, then sinks on his knees,
 And his face to the paving stones flatly doth squeeze,
 With that sibilant noise which, as some writers mention,
 "Doth an attitude show of respectful attention!"
 The Councillor smiles, bids his servant be brave,
 Turns away, and with features once more set and grave,
 Passes in through the gateway that stands on his right,
 And the large heavy doors shut him out from our sight.
 Kwansuké lies for a moment, and then, with a bound
 Like a harlequin, rises again from the ground.
 First he pauses, and drops a salt tear at the view
 Of the strong massive portal he dare not pass through;
 (Like the Peri who, Thomas Moore's tale doth relate,
 Stood in sorrow and wept near the Paradise Gate;)
 Next, the purse he unties,
 And evinces surprise
 At the rich store of nibu that greets his glad eyes,
 Rolls it up as before, and conceals it beneath

The wide folds of his dress; then he draws from its sheath
 The bright sword that's to carve him a fortune anew,
 And stands almost entranced as the steel meets his view:
 "What a beautiful weapon! how perfectly made!
 "And what exquisite fittings! how trenchant a blade!
 "And see here, on the sheath, too, quite plain to behold,
 "The good Councillor's badge worked in lacquer and gold!
 "Good! this sword shall remind me, where'er I may go,
 "Of the grand debt that I to my master now owe:
 "If he'd only a foe! then to prove my sincerity
 "I'd be down on the chap with most killing asperity!
 "Yet, just hold for a moment—yes, didn't he say
 "That the Lady O Hidé had caused him dismay?
 "And he furthermore said
 "That he 'would she were dead,'
 "And invoked sundry curses to fall on her head:
 "She's 'ensnared our young Lord'?—then my duty is plain;
 "I'll take pretty good care she don't do so again,
 "For in view of the fact that her conduct is sich,"
 (Rhyme demands that word, reader) "I'll 'go for' the witch!"

Having made up his mind, and determined his victim,
 He at once flies away as though Benkei had kick'd him!

The scene is changed. A lordly hall
 Before our eyes is laid;
 On post and ceiling, beam and wall,
 Are paintings rare portrayed;
 Here vase of price, there silken shawl,
 Is carelessly displayed;
 And gilded badges plain declare,
 'Tis Kashiû Sama's castle fair.

Lovely ladies, gay and bright,
 Pass in groups before our sight;
 Dainty maidens, tall and slim,
 Fair of face, and lithe of limb;
 There, the fairest 'midst the throng,

Witching Hidé moves along;
 Far outshines each rival, far
 As the comet shames the star,
 As the snow white sagi shows
 'Midst a flock of sable crows!
 Blind to all, on her we gaze;
 Listen, while I sing her praise.
 Imprimis, a nose, which (though perfect, I'd say),
 Some might deem a trifle too much retroussé;
 Next, a sweet dimpled chin, and two cherry-red lips,
 With a smile that e'en Venus's own might eclipse—
 But my Muse says, "Enough!"
 And turns off in a huff;
 Of description she thinks you have quite quantum suff.;
 And, thus hearing her rail,
 All my energies fail—
 As to paint the fair damsel mere words can't avail,
 I'll give up the hard task, and go on with my tale;
 Leaving each of my readers to fill in the rest
 As to him (or to her) may appear to be best!
 Yet I own I'm inclin'd
 First to speak out my mind,
 Thus—I wouldn't give much for the man
 Who can not in his heartstrings a tender spot find
 For the daughters of lovely Japan!
 And this one fact I'll tell my Muse,
 Nor heed her angry tone—
 Stood I in Kashiû Sama's shoes,
 I'd do as he has done!

To resume, then—'tis winter, the sky's dull and drear
 As is mostly the case at this season of year;
 And foot-deep on the ground
 Lies the snow all around
 The proud castle, so thick that it deadens the sound
 Of the peasant's slow footsteps, as plodding he goes
 Down the road to the town, with his fingers and toes
 Quite benumbed, while long icicles hang from his nose!
 (And just here I may say
 It's quite strange, by the way,

How the Japanese love snowy scenes to portray
 On those long kakémono you notice each day;
 If you order "a winter scene," gladly I'll lay
 Ten to one—that's long odds, but there's "nary" mistake in it—
 That they paint you a snow-storm, and mandarin-drake in it!)

To-day fair Hidé fain would go
 To view the landscape o'er,
 Clothed in its garb of spotless snow;
 Her train is at the door,
 And Lady Hidé's palanquin
 Too long has "stopped the way,"
 And yet she lingers still within;
 What makes my lady stay?

The reason, kind reader, I'll tell you full soon,
 Her Ladyship's fainted, gone off in a swoon!—
 What a shocking catastrophe! in rush her maids,
 Bearing hartshorn, burnt feathers, and sundry more aids
 To restore animation; her system is strong,
 And she "comes to" completely before very long.
 Ah! Lady Hidé! was't purposely done?
 Was that sickness a feint in more senses than one?
 Were you warned to beware, by some merciful dream,
 Of yon dark form awaiting you down by the stream?
 True or false, I can't say;

Be that all as it may,

The fact stands—'twas the death-knell of Lady O Tel!
 For, on hearing the tumult, that much-injured dame
 Rushes forth, her eyes gleaming with jealousy's flame;
 "Ha! gone off in a faint?" mutters she—"let her stay!
 "And, as she can't go out, I suppose that I may;
 "'Tis a sin to keep coolies thus waiting all day."
 With a glance at her rival stretch'd prone on the floor,
 She steps into the litter, and starts from the door.

'Tis a wintry day,
 And the sun's last ray
 O'er the landscape pure and white

Is sinking slow,
And the sparkling snow
 Is tinged with its golden light;
And the piercing blast
Sends driving past
 The snow in feath'ry flake,
Where the willows rear
Their forms so drear
 Beside the frozen lake;
And the trees are bare,
Through the chill, bleak air
 Is the curlew's whistle heard—
The curlew wild,
By Bret Harte styled

 " That melancholy bird! "—

(But, indeed, the poor curlew has plenty of reason
To be rather down-hearted at such a bad season;
For, in fact, 'tis enough to depress any man,
To be snowbound, by night, on a moor in Japan!)

Yet there's one man, at least, who cares nought for the snow;
On his hands and his knees he creeps " stealthily slow, "
As if dreading detection, to where on the bank
Of the stream stands a patch of reeds, slimy and dank;
Soon their shelter he gains, and there crouches full low,
While his footprints are hid by the thick-falling snow;
 There he silently lies,
 Ever straining his eyes
Toward the height where the castle's tall battlements rise
In a huge, looming mass 'fore the darkening skies.
 Is he stalking a deer?
 Does he strive to get near

To the wary wild goose, in the hope of a shot?
No; I'm sure I can boldly affirm he does not;
No; he's bound, to my eyes, on no errand so tame,
For his look makes me fancy he seeks nobler game;
And I think, with one stroke (if the truth must be told)
He'll have killed rather more than a game-bag can hold!

See him rise once again—
For a moment remain
Fix'd and stern—then prostrate himself flat on the plain!
He has sighted his prey!—hark! a click—then a pause—
Then a dull, sliding sound—we can feel that he draws
From its scabbard the hunting-knife, soon to be dyed
In the blood of his quarry!—he turns to one side—
With a back-handed twitch flings the sheath on the snow—
But reveals, while so doing, a face that we know!
It is Kwansuké!—depend on't, the deed will be done,
For he's plainly gone in for "the whole hog or none!"
See! from out the dark shadows obscuring the plain,
With a slow, steady tramp comes the nobleman's train;
All so silent, so solemn, you'd think that you view
Not a body of men, but some weird spectral crew!
Through their ranks not a sound, not a whisper is breathed.
Each retainer's sword-handle's in oil-paper sheathed;
As a fence 'gainst the storm,
And to keep himself warm,
In a raincoat each man has envelop'd his form;
On their feet thick straw sandals are carefully laced,
And their heads with large round hats of bamboo are graced;
Till, in fact, each stout vassal appears to our eyes
Like an overgrown mushroom of marvelous size!
In the midst, on their shoulders, six coolies uphold
The gay litter, all deck'd with blue velvet and gold—
The gay litter, in short, of the Lady O Tel;
And behind come more coolies to act as relay;
While the lance and the halberd, the plume and the spear,
All around their fair mistress her vassals uprear;
Such the emblems of rank which you always might see
Round a Japanese noble of lofty degree.
Slowly marches the train—some fatality leads
It direct toward that ill-omen'd dark patch of reeds;
In a moment—so swift that it plainly appals
E'en the boldest among them—the thunderbolt falls!

Hark to the agonizing cries,
The shrieks of pain that loudly rise!
The work of death young Kwansuké plies

Amidst his startled foes!
 These on their comrades wildly call,
 Those turn to fight—'tis useless all—
 Man after man they reel and fall
 Beneath his deadly blows!
 At the onset the vassals are scared with dismay,
 As with strength superhuman he forces his way
 Toward the litter—but then
 They all rally like men;
 And just here, reader kind, if I'd only the pen
 Of the "Press Correspondents" who're granted facilities
 For observing those sad Russo-Turkish hostilities,
 (It would seem as the war had engross'd their whole heart
 in it),
 I'd describe to you now
 Such a rattling good row
 As would make you quite anxious yourself to take part in it!
 For at once I'd narrate, without pause or ahem,
 How they lay on to him, and he "lams" into them—
 How their hats and their cloaks are flung quickly aside—
 How they tug at their sword-hilts, in oil-paper tied,
 (Far too tightly, alas!)—how they hack and they hew
 At th' assailant, who hacks, cuts, and thrusts at them too,
 Till the dead and the wounded lie scatter'd around,
 While their life-blood empurples the snow on the ground!
 At such writing, however, I'm not quite au fait,
 So will merely describe the "tag end" of the fray:
 See! the last coolie drops, almost cleft to the chin,
 And our hero's alongside the gay palanquin;
 See! he tears down the blind, forces open the door—
 Then a long, wild shriek rises—the tragedy's o'er!
 Here I think with Sir Walter "'twere sorrow to tell"
 The full tale of the sad "butcher-work that befell;"
 So suffice it to mention that Lady O Tel
 Will not trouble her hairdresser much from to-day!
 With a furious shout,
 In a menacing rout,
 (For, at last, ev'ry man has his katana out)
 Here the remnant of vassals come up at a run;
 But too slow to catch Kwansuké!—his foul errand's done,

So he heads for the stream at the deuce of a pace,
Like an athlete who starts for a hundred yards' race;
Soon he reaches its brink, having "dodged" all his foes,
Plunges in—and the dark waters over him close!

Here I'll leave you to guess
Both the shame and distress
Which the luckless retainers now plainly express,
As they gaze on their lady's corpse (wanting a head!)
And then reckon the list of their wounded and dead.
They're o'ercome with emotion, fear-stricken and awed;
What account can they render for this to their lord?
They've abandoned their mistress, they've let her be slain,
And they feel explanations will prove but in vain;
Then, their foe was but one single swordsman, and he,
To their rage and chagrin, has retreated scot-free!
Matters clearly have come to a desperate pass;
So they raise up the litter (now lighter, alas!
Than it was when they started at noontide to-day)
And, with sighs of dejection and looks of dismay,
To the dark-frowning castle they take their sad way;
And I think, if I read their blank faces aright,
There'll be cases of seppuku happen to-night!
Once again the scene changes:—we plainly descry
'Tis the opposite side of the river—our eye
Merely rests on a bank built to keep off the flood,
While beneath it strong timbers project from the mud.
Ah, look there! from the water, all dripping and dank,
There emerges a form, which crawls up the steep bank!
'Tis the form of a man—but so dreadful a sight
That you'd almost believe him some foul river sprite!
In his mouth is a drawn sword—and see! just beneath,
From its long raven tresses fast clutch'd twixt his teeth,
With its features all writhed and distorted with dread
As when hewn from the trunk, hangs a fresh-severed head!
Look! he reels and he staggers, he hardly can stand,
'Tis a wonder he's ever got safely to land;
For, between his long swim and his recent hard bout,
Mr. Kwansuké's undoubtedly wholly "played out!"

Down he sinks on the ground—then he struggles to rise
On his knees—with his hand wipes the spray from his eyes—
Lastly, sits himself down to examine his prize.

I don't know if your skill, reader, e'er you've essayed
At a game that's called "poker" (extensively played
In the "States")—if you have, you've most probably seen
And remarked the queer change that comes o'er a man's mien
When he's drawn a fifth card which is not worth a rush,
And which leaves him with what's styled "a darn'd busted
flush!"

Just conceive, now, the look that his face would display
If a pool of a million gold dollars then lay
On the table before him—next try, if you can,
To intensify ten times the look of that man—
Well, you've now got an inkling, from all I have said,
Of the glance of wild agony, horror and dread
That comes o'er Kwansuké's face as he stares at the head!

Now I trust, for humanity's sake, that just here
There are none too hard-hearted to squeeze out a tear,
Yes, a salt tear of sympathy pure and unfeign'd,
O'er the "crushing bad luck" that our hero's sustained!

First, the poor fellow's lain

Half the day on the plain,

At the cost of much sorrow and anguish and pain,
Sadly tortured with frost-bitten hands, ears and feet,
And with nothing to drink, nor a morsel to eat—
He's imperilled his life, too, in battle's fierce shock,
And his head shows the traces of thump and of knock
Dealt by Kaga's retainers who, void of compassion,
Have abused their advantage in barbarous fashion—
Then he's, thirdly, been duck'd in the river so cold;
And to find—after all—that he's only been "sold!"
That Dame Fortune, who loves such vagaries to play,
Having led him a dance, has then stoop'd to betray;
For she's mockingly thrown to poor Kwansuké, instead
Of the prize that he's hoped for, a different head!

'Tis enough to drive frantic the veriest saint!
 And I won't try the task of attempting to paint
 His expression so black,
 As he hurls the head back
 In the dark swollen river that rushes beneath:
 Next he wraps up his sword (being minus its sheath)
 In a blue cotton kerchief he draws from his breast,
 And so leaves the sad scene with a visage depress'd;
 While with deep lamentation he groans and he whines
 O'er the thought of enduring such "awful hard lines!"

Chang'd again is the scene:—Now before us there lies
 A poor fisherman's hut of diminutive size—
 It is ev'ning—and there
 Are a jovial pair—
 This a man, that a damsel remarkably fair—
 Who are just sitting down with a keen hungry air
 To their frugal repast;
 (They don't know 'tis the last
 That as brother and sister together they'll share!)

Well, to cut matters short, I will here tell you plain
 That this hut is the place where young Kwansuké has lain
 Safely hid, since his fruitless attack on the train;
 And his sister so keen
 For his comfort has been,
 As to share his long exile, and rule his cuisine!
 How they ply their long chopsticks! How deftly the fish
 And the daikon's transferred to their mouths from the dish!
 How they go for their saké!—but ah! before long
 They have ended their meal, comes a bang at the door,
 And in walks an intruder, who startles them sore—
 (Like that Captain Miles Standish, unbidden who came
 To the gay marriage-feast of his Puritan "flame!")
 Down he flings his large hat, down his mantle does throw—
 'Tis our hero's old master, the agèd karô!

With a kind salutation, he squats on the mat,
And, without more preamble, commences to chat.

"On a night cold and drear,

"In December last year,

"When returning from town, and when fast drawing near

"To the castle, my foot, 'neath the snow on the ground,

"Struck an object—I stooped, and this scabbard I found"—

(He produces it)—"Fancy again my surprise,

"When the badge of my household thereon met my eyes!

"I remember'd well, Kwansuké, that lately to you

"I'd presented that scabbard, with sword in it too;

"How it came to be lost, how it chanced that it lay

"In the snow, I knew not—so continued my way.

"At the castle that night

"There was grief and affright;

"And I learn'd, by degrees, the whole tale of the fight

"Which resulted, alas! in the terrible death

"Of her ladyship—well, I of course held my breath

"As regards the sword-scabbard, nor stoop'd to betray

"My suspicions—but, Kwansuké, be candid and say

"Was it you took the head off poor Lady O Tei?"

Thus adjur'd, our young hero does plainly declare

All the facts, gentle reader, of which you're aware;

How, conceal'd 'neath the hedge, he had clearly o'erheard

Of the Councillor's tirade each separate word;

How his blood it did boil, and his brain it did burn;

How he thought to his patron he'd do a good turn,

By depriving the demon O Hidé of life;

How he only found out at the end of the strife

That he'd fail'd in his scheme (to his infinite woe)

And "instead of the pigeon had slaughter'd the crow!"

—Here, in proof of his tale, he produces the blade,

Which the sheath fits exactly, as though for it made.

—"I assure you, kind master, I frequently since

"Have endeavor'd to whisper the ear of our prince;

"Being fully resolved, having made a 'clean breast,'

"And my fatal mistake having bravely confess'd,

"To commit hara-kiri, and die like a man,
"To proclaim my devotion to him and my clan!
"But no chance was forthcoming—Fate would not accord
"That poor Kwansuké should e'er meet with Kaga's proud lord;
"Yet that object's attain'd, now I've met, sir, with you;
"And there rests only one thing for Kwansuké to do!"

Cries the Councillor, "Nay!

"I beseech you to stay

"Your mad scheme, and just listen to what I shall say:
"You must know, then, our lord took it into his brain
"Twas through Hidé's foul plots that his lady was slain;
"All the love that, while living, to her he'd denied
"Seem'd again to revive when he learn'd how she died;
"He's a man of strong impulse, as doubtless you know,
"Quick he flung off the glamour that blinded him so,
"Gave O Hidé the sack, cast her off from his gate,
"And then turn'd his attention to matters of state;
"What a weeding took place! evil councillors went,
"Bad officials were all to the right-about sent—
"Bag and baggage he clear'd 'em out, every one,
"And has proved himself truly his good father's son!
"And this grand reformation, I take it, is due—
"Indirectly, of course—Mr. Kwansuké, to you!
"Pray don't think, then, of suicide—you're not betrayed—
"But reënter my service; your fortune is made!"

With a sorrowful sigh,

And a glance in his eye

That bespeaks resolution, does Kwansuké reply—
"What! you ask me to live—me, a true samurai!
"When the only resource that's yet left me's to die!
"You invite me to live—you beseech me to stay—
"When 'twas I struck the blow that slew Lady O Tel!
"I rejoice at the indirect fruits of my work;
"For myself, though—stand by! you shall yield me that dirk!"

All is o'er—with his life's blood the ill-fated man
Has now sealed his devotion to chief and to clan!

MORAL.

I.

Married men! I would first give a caution to you:
Pay your wives that devotion that's rightly their due;
And don't wander o' nights, nor be tempted to roam,
But as soon as it's sunset go soberly home!

II.

Married ladies! if e'er you're inclined to be gay,
Think, oh! think of the fate of poor Lady O Tel!

III.

Lovely damsels! be warned by this drama so tragic:
Learn that beauty ne'er needs the assistance of magic
To ensnare willing victims—no more potent wile
Do I know, than the charm of a fair maiden's smile!

IV.

Last of all, to young bachelors here I would speak:
Don't be too fond of "larking," of joke or of freak;
Don't disturb honest folks when they're snugly abed,
And take care that you don't lose your heart or your head!

Mr. McClatchie, the clever versifier of this play, was
an interpreter in the British Consular service, and be-
came fully conversant with the Japanese point of view.
He assures us that a Japanese audience, though cer-
tainly sympathetic, differs considerably from an Occi-

dental one. The spectators there are by no means averse to showing their amusement when—as we have just seen in this play—an unfortunate woman is murdered by mistake, but are easily moved to tears when the murderer finally commits suicide after a long speech garnished with grandiloquent allusions to the spirit of “loyalty” that caused him to perpetrate the outrage in the first instance. Hence, in versifying this play, no style has appeared so apt to him as that of the *Ingoldsby Legends*—that delightful mixture of pathos and bathos, of true poetic expression and of jingling rhyme. That the choice was happy, we are convinced, no one who has read these pleasant lines will dispute.

OMAR AND OH MY!

A BURLESQUE DRAMATIZATION OF THE CELEBRATED
PERSIAN POEM "RUBAIYAT"

BY

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OMAR.

LION.

LIZARD.

WILD ASS.

NIGHTINGALE.

ROSE.

SAKI.

PRELUDE.

"Mr. Punch," having heard a rumor to the effect that a drama founded upon the Rubáiyat of Omar Khayyám, as rendered into English by Fitzgerald, had been written in the United States and was to be shortly produced on the stage, hastened, with his usual enterprise, to present a rival version. To facilitate a proper understanding of this clever burlesque we present a brief biography of Omar Khayyám, the astronomer-poet of Persia, and a few of the quatrains.

Omar Khayyám was born probably before the middle of our eleventh century, and died about the year 1123. He was an able mathematician, as well as a charming poet. Edward Fitzgerald's translation of the quatrains has made both poet and translator immortal:

II.

Before the phantom of False Morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried:
When all the Temple is prepared within
Why nods the drowsy worshipper outside?

VII.

Come fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling;
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

XII.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
 A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness;
 O, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIX.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XXXIV.

Then of the Thee in Me who works behind
 The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
 A Lamp amid the Darkness, and I heard
 As from Without—the Me within Thee blind.

LXXII.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
 Whereunder crawling, coop'd, we live and die,
 Lift not your hands to It for help—for it
 As impotently moves as you or I.

The quatrains relating to the conversation between the pots run from LXXXII to XC inclusive. The one, perhaps, most frequently quoted is LXXXVIII:

“Why,” said another, “Some there are who tell
 Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
 The luckless Pots he marr’d in making—Pish!
 He’s a Good Fellow, and ’twill all be well.

Some five hundred of these rhyming four-line stanzas are attributed to Omar Khayyám. They breathe a spirit

of pantheism, praise wine, woman and song, and are often mystical in tone, but the mystic terminology is used simply to ridicule the mysticism then so largely in vogue. He has been happily called the Voltaire of the East.

SCENE.—Courtyard of the deserted palace of Jamshyd, canopied by that inverted bowl commonly called the sky. To right, a tavern—not deserted. To left, a potter's house. At back, the grave of Bahrám, whence a sound of snoring proceeds. A wild ass stamps fitfully upon it. It is four o'clock in the morning, and the "false dawn" shows in the sky. In the center of the stage stand a lion and a lizard, eyeing each other mistrustfully.

Lion.—Look here, do you keep these courts, or do I?

Lizard.—(Resentfully.) I don't know. I believe we both keep them.

Lion.—(Sarcastically.) Do you? Then I venture to differ from you.

Lizard.—Perhaps you'd rather we took turns?

Lion.—Oh, no, I wouldn't. I mean to have this job to myself.

(He and the lizard close in mortal combat. After a gallant struggle the latter is killed, and the lion proceeds to eat him. Suddenly a shadowy form issues from the grave at back of stage.)

Lion.—Bahrám, by Jove! Confound that jackass.

(Bolts remains of lizard and then bolts himself, pursued by shadowy form.)

Wild Ass.—They said I couldn't wake him. But I knew better! Hee-haw! (Exit in triumph.)

(A sound of revelry becomes noticeable from the tavern. A crowd gathers outside. The voice of Omar, rather tipsy, is heard.)

Omar.—When all the temple—hic!—is prepared within, why nods the lousy worshipper outside?

(A cock crows, and the sun rises.)

Crowd.—(Shouting in unison.) Open then the door. You know how little while we have to stay. And, once departed, goodness only knows when we shall get back again!

Omar.—(Opening the door and appearing unsteadily on the threshold.) You can't come in. It's—hic—full.

(Closes door again.)

Crowd.—I say, what rot!

(Exeunt, depressed.)

Nightingale.—(Jubilantly from tree.) Wine! wine! Red wine!

Rose.—(From neighboring bush, much shocked.) My dear, you know I have always been a total abstainer.

Nightingale.—So you have. But every morning brings a thousand roses. After all, you're cheap. Jamshyd and I like our liquor, and plenty of it.

Rose.—(Shaking her head in disapproval.) I've heard he drank deep.

Nightingale.—Of course he did. You should have seen him when Hâtim called to supper! He simply went for it!

Rose.—(Blushing crimson.) How dreadful!

Nightingale.—(Contemptuously.) I dare say. But you wouldn't be so red yourself if some buried Cæsar didn't fertilize your roots. Why, even the hyacinth's past isn't altogether creditable, and as for grass—why, I could tell you things about the grass that would scare the soul out of a vegetable.

Rose.—(Annoyed.) I'm not a vegetable.

Nightingale.—Well, well, I can't stay to argue with you. I've but a little time to flutter myself. (Exit on the wing.)

(Enter Omar from tavern. He is by this time magnificently intoxicated and is leaning on the arm of a fascinating Sâkî. He has a jug of wine in his hand.)

Omar.—(Trying to kiss her.) Ah, my beloved, fill the cup that clears to-day of past regrets and future fears. To-morrow! Why to-morrow! I may be—

Sáki.—(Interrupting.) I know what you're going to say. To-morrow you'll be sober. But you won't. I know you. Go home!

Omar.—Home!—hic. What do I want with home? A book of verses underneath the bough, a jug of wine, a loaf of bread—no, no bread, two jugs of wine—and thou (puts arm round her waist) beside me singing like a bulbul.

(Sings uproariously.)

For to-night we'll merry be!

For to-night—

Sáki.—Fie! An old man like you!

Omar.—Old! Thank goodness I am old. When I was young I went to school and heard the sages. Didn't learn much there! They said I came like water and went like wind. Horrid chilly Band-of-Hope sort of doctrine. I know better now.

(Drinks from the jug in his hand.)

Sáki.—(Watching him anxiously.) Take care. You'll spill it.

Omar.—Never mind. It won't be wasted. All goes to quench some poor beggar's thirst down there (points below). Dare say he needs it—hic.

Sáki.—(Shocked.) How can you talk so!

Omar.—(Growing argumentative in his cups.) I must abjure the balm of life, I must! I must give up wine for fear of—hic— What is it I'm to fear? Gout, I suppose. Not I! (Takes another drink.)

Sáki.—(Trying to take jug from him.) There, there, that's enough.

Omar.—(Fast losing coherence in his extreme intoxication.) I want to talk to you about Thee and Me. That's what I want to talk about. (Counting on his fingers.) You see there's the Thee in Me and there's the Me in Thee. That's myshticism, that is. Difficult word to say, mysticishm. Must light lamp and see if I can't find it. Must be somewhere about.

Sáki.—You're drunk, that's what you are. Disgracefully drunk.

Omar.—Of course, I'm drunk. I am to-day what I was yesterday, and to-morrow I shall not be less. Kiss me.

Sáki.—(Boxing his ears.) I won't have it, I tell you. I'm a respectable Sáki; and you're not to take liberties, or I'll leave you to find your way home alone.

Omar.—(Becoming maudlin.) Don't leave me, my rose, my bullfinch—I mean bulbul. You know how my road is beset with pitfalls—hic!—and with gin.

Sáki.—(Disgusted.) Plenty of gin, I know. You never can pass a public-house.

Omar.—(Struck with the splendor of the idea.) I say—hic!—let's fling the dust aside, and naked on the air of Heaven ride. It's shame not to do it!

(Flings off hat, and stamps on it by way of preliminary.)

Sáki.—(Scandalized.) If you take anything else off I shall call the police. (Exit hurriedly.)

Omar.—(Terrified.) Here, Sáki, come back. How am I to find my way without you? (A pause.) What's come to the girl? I only spoke—hic—meta—phorically. Difficult word to say, meta—phorically! (Longer pause.) How am I to get home? Can't go 'lone. Must wait for some one to come along. (Peers tipsily about him.) Strange, isn't it, that though lots of people go along here every day, not one returns to tell me of the road. Very strange. S'pose must sleep here—S'pose— (Rolls into ditch and falls asleep.)

(The curtain falls for a moment. When it rises again, day is departing and it is growing dark. Omar is still in his ditch. The door of the potter's house, to the left of the stage, is open, the potter having betaken himself to the tavern opposite, and the pots within are arguing fiercely.)

First Pot.—Don't tell me I was only made to be broken. I know better.

Second Pot.—Even a peevish boy wouldn't break me! The Potter would whack him if he did!

Third Pot.—(Of a more ungainly make.) Depends on what he drank out of you.

Second Pot.—What's that you say, you lopsided object?

Third Pot.—That's right. Sneer at me! 'Tisn't my fault if the potter's hand shook when he made me. He was not sober.

Fourth Pot.—(I think a Sdfi pipkin.) It's all very well to talk about pot and potter. What I want to know is, what did the pot call the kettle?

Third Pot.—(Grumbling.) I believe my clay's too dry. That's what's the matter with me!

(The moon rises. A step is heard without.)

Several Pots.—Hark, there's the potter! Can't you hear his boots creaking?

Enter potter from tavern.

Potter.—(Crossly.) Shut up in there, or I'll break some of you.

(The pots tremble and are silent. There is nothing pots dislike so much as being broken.)

Potter.—(Seeing Omar.) Hullo. Come out of that. You're in my ditch. (Lifts him into sitting posture by the collar.)

Omar.—(Rubbing his eyes.) Eh? What's that? Oh, my head! my head! (Clasps it between his hands.)

Potter.—Get up! You've been drinking.

Omar.—(Dazed at his penetration.) I wonder how you guessed that!

Potter.—It's plain enough. You've been providing your fading life with liquor. I can see that with half an eye.

Omar.—I have, I have. I've drowned my glory in a cup, and my head's very bad.

Potter.—You should take the pledge.

Omar.—Oh! I've sworn to give up drink lots of times. (Doubtfully.) But was I sober when I swore? Tell me that.

Potter.—(Scratching his head.) Dunnow.

Omar.—(Staggering to his feet.) Would but the desert of the fountain yield one glimpse! In more prosaic language, could you get something to drink? I'm rather star-scattered myself, the grass is wet.

(Potter goes to house and takes up third pot at random.)

Thrd Pot.—(Delighted.) Now he's going to fill me with the old familiar juice!

(Potter fills him with water and returns to Omar.)

Thrd Pot.—(Disgusted.) Water! Well, I'm dashed!

Omar.—(To potter.) Many thanks. Oh Sáki, here's to you. (Drains beaker.) Ugh! don't think much of your liquor. I wish the moon wouldn't look at me like that. She's a beastly color. Why doesn't she look the other way?

Potter.—(Sarcastically.) Wants to see you, I suppose.

Omar.—(Darkly.) Well, some day she won't. That's all Farewell. Oh Sáki, yours is a joyous errand. But I wish you had put something stronger in the glass. (Handing it back to him.) Turn it down, there's a good fellow. (Exit.)

THE DEATH
OF
TINTAGILES.

BY
MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TINTAGILES.

YGRAINE.

BELLANGÈRE.

} *Sisters of Tintagiles.*

AGLOVALE.

THREE SERVANTS of the Queen.

PRELUDE.

TO the "Flemish Shakespeare"—Maurice Maeterlinck—belongs not merely the honor of ranking foremost in the remarkable literary revolt against materialism which has characterized the last decade, but to him more than to anyone else belongs the higher honor of having successfully "carried the new spirit into the domain of dramatic art, the most circumscribed of all by tradition and convention, and the one into which—depending as it does for success on the instantaneous appreciation of the public—it is the most difficult to introduce fresh ideals and unfamiliar presentments." To say upon the stage what has never been said before, to convey impressions which no dramatic author has attempted as yet to reduce within the compass of eye and ear, to dispense deliberately with all those external aids and mechanical contrivances which have come to be regarded as essential attributes of dramatic representation in order that the spiritual significance of the action may the more easily dominate the merely external presentment, are surely ideals which should command immediate admiration and sympathy. Yet the English-speaking public have been singularly indifferent to the work of this Belgian dramatist—this great ethical teacher.

The Death of Tintagiles—the play we are told Maeterlinck himself prefers of all he has written—is one of those extremely curious "little dramas for Marionettes"—fate dramas they might be termed.

While reading the play the conviction grows upon us that the life of Tintagiles is at the mercy of a mysterious and inexorable force—a force against which the sisters' abounding love will contend in vain, and that the whole play is evidently symbolic of the futile, agonizing struggle of the human race against death. Death is, in fact, one of Maeterlinck's favorite themes. In one form or another the sense of death, of its nearness, its swift approach, penetrates everything that the dramatist has written. For him death is not the end but the culminating point of life—the mould, as he expresses it, into which our life runs. In *The Death of Tintagiles* death dominates the stage, and there is no action, properly speaking, as Virginia M. Crawford has pointed out, independently of the ghostly visitor. In truth, to quote the same keen critic, it is only by accident, as it were, that Maeterlinck is a dramatist; it is with the mystical side of life alone that he really concerns himself, and he does so because for him, as for every other so-called mystic, no other side of life is worth troubling about. For him the palpable material objects of the universe are unimportant unrealities; the unseen, unfelt influences that surround us constitute the real facts of our existence. All else is vanity, mere futility. That which he sees with his eyes and hears with his ears is for him of no account; his whole consciousness is absorbed in intense effort to realize ever more clearly that which is unseen and unspoken. In life, as in death, we are at the mercy of forces which from all eternity have shaped our destinies. We do nothing of our own free will, even when we think ourselves

most free, and never less than in all matters concerned with love. For the most part we remain voluntarily blind to these great truths; we prefer to ignore them, we are afraid to face them. Yet each of us is possessed of a soul—the divine sense of the spiritual in life; and if we would we might all live in far closer union than we do with these occult influences, and with open, inquiring eyes might gaze far deeper into their mysterious depths.

ACT I.

SCENE—On the top of a hill overlooking the castle.

Enter Ygraine, holding Tintagiles by the hand.

Ygraine.—Your first night will be sad, Tintagiles. The roar of the sea is already about us; and the trees are moaning. It is late. The moon is sinking behind the poplars that stifle the palace. We are alone, perhaps; but here, one has ever to be on one's guard. They seem to watch lest the smallest happiness come near. I said to myself one day, right down in the depths of my soul—and God himself could scarcely hear—I said to myself one day that I was feeling almost happy. There needed nothing more; and very soon after, our old father died, and our two brothers disappeared, and not a living creature can tell us where they are. I am here all alone, with my poor sister and you, my little Tintagiles; and I have no confidence in the future. Come to me; let me take you on my knees. First kiss me; and put your little arms—there—right round my neck; perhaps they will not be able to unfasten them. Do you remember the time when it was I who carried you in the evening, when the hour had come; and how frightened you were at the shadows of my lamp in the corridors, those long corridors with not a single window? I felt my soul tremble on my lips when I saw you again, suddenly, this morning. I thought you were so far away and in safety. Who made you come here?

Tintagiles.—I do not know, little sister.

Ygra.—Do you remember what they said?

Tin.—They said I must go away.

Ygra.—But why had you to go away?

Tin.—Because the Queen wished it.

Ygra.—Did they not say why she wished it?—I am sure they must have said many things.

Tin.—Little sister, I did not hear.

Ygra.—When they spoke among themselves, what was it they said?

Tin.—Little sister, they dropped their voices when they spoke.

Ygra.—All the time?

Tin.—All the time, sister Ygraine; except when they looked at me.

Ygra.—Did they say nothing about the Queen?

Tin.—They said, sister Ygraine, that no one ever saw her.

Ygra.—And the people who were with you on the ship, did they say nothing?

Tin.—They gave all their time to the wind and the sails, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—Ah! That does not surprise me, my child.

Tin.—They left me all alone, little sister.

Ygra.—Listen to me, Tintagiles; I will tell you what I know.

Tin.—What do you know, sister Ygraine?

Ygra.—Very little, my child. My sister and I have gone on living here ever since we were born, not daring to understand the things that happened. I have lived a long time in this island, and I might as well have been blind; yet it all seemed natural to me. A bird that flew, a leaf that trembled, a rose that opened—these were events to me. Such silence has always reigned here that a ripe fruit falling in the park would draw faces to the window. And no one seemed to have any suspicion; but one night I learned that there must be something besides. I wished to escape and I could not. Have you understood what I am telling you?

Tin.—Yes, yes, little sister; I can understand anything.

Ygra.—Then let us not talk any more of these things; one does not know. Do you see, behind the dead trees which poison

the horizon, do you see the castle, there, right down in the valley?

Tin.—I see something very black—is that the castle, sister Ygraine?

Ygra.—Yes, it is very black. It lies far down amid a mass of gloomy shadows. It is there that we have to live. They might have built it on the top of the great mountains that surround it. The mountains are blue in the day-time. One could have breathed; one could have looked down on the sea and on the plains beyond the cliffs. But they preferred to build it deep down in the valley; too low even for the air to come. It is falling in ruins, and no one troubles. The walls are crumbling; it might be fading away in the gloom. There is only one tower which time does not touch. It is enormous; and its shadow is always on the house.

Tin.—They are lighting something, sister Ygraine. See, see, the great red windows!

Ygra.—They are the windows of the tower, Tintagiles; they are the only ones in which you will ever see light; it is there that the Queen has her throne.

Tin.—Shall I not see the Queen?

Ygra.—No one can see her.

Tin.—Why can no one see her?

Ygra.—Come closer, Tintagiles. Not even a bird or a blade of grass must hear us.

Tin.—There is no grass, little sister.—(A moment's silence.) What does the Queen do?

Ygra.—That no one knows, my child. She is never seen. She lives there, all alone in the tower; and those who wait on her do not go out by daylight. She is very old; she is the mother of our mother, and she wishes to reign alone. She is suspicious and jealous, and they say she is mad. She is afraid lest some one should raise himself to her place; and it is probably because of this fear of hers that you have been brought hither. Her orders are carried out; but no one knows how. She never leaves the tower, and all the gates are closed night and day. I have never seen her, but it seems others have, long ago, when she was young.

Tin.—Is she very ugly, sister Ygraine?

Ygra.—They say she is not beautiful, and that her form is strange. But those who have seen her dare not speak of her. And who knows whether they have seen her? She has a power which we do not understand, and we live here with a terrible weight on our soul. You must not be unduly frightened, or have bad dreams; we will watch over you, little Tintagiles, and no harm can come to you; but do not stray far from me, or your sister Bellangère, or our old master Aglovale.

Tin.—Aglovale, too, sister Ygraine?

Ygra.—Aglovale too—he loves us.

Tin.—He is so old, little sister!

Ygra.—He is old, but very wise. He is the only friend we have left; and he knows many things. It is strange; she made you come here, and no one was told of it. I do not know what is in my heart. I was sorrowful and glad to know that you were far away, beyond the sea. And now—I was taken by surprise. I went out this morning to see whether the sun was rising over the mountains; and I saw you on the threshold. I knew you at once.

Tin.—No, no, little sister; it was I who laughed first.

Ygra.—I could not laugh—just then. You will understand. It is time, Tintagiles, and the wind is becoming black on the sea. Kiss me before getting up; kiss me, harder, again, again. You do not know how one loves. Give me your little hand. I will keep it in mine, and we will go back to the old sick castle.
(They go out.)

ACT II.

SCENE—A room in the castle, in which Aglovale and Ygraine are seated.

Enter Bellangère.

Bellangère.—Where is Tintagiles?

Ygraine.—He is here; do not speak too loud. He is asleep in the other room. He was a little pale, he did not seem well. The journey had tired him—he was a long time on the sea.

Or perhaps it is the atmosphere of the castle which has alarmed his little soul. He was crying, and did not know why he cried. I nursed him on my knees; come, look at him. He is asleep in our bed. He sleeps very gravely, with one hand on his brow, like a little sorrowful king.

Bel.—(Suddenly bursting into tears.) Sister! Sister! my poor sister!

Ygra.—Why are you crying?

Bel.—I dare not tell what I know; and I am not sure that I know anything. But yet I have heard—that which one could not hear.

Ygra.—What have you heard?

Bel.—I was passing close to the corridors of the tower——

Ygra.—Ah!

Bel.—One of the doors was ajar. I pushed it very gently. I went in.

Ygra.—Where?

Bel.—I had never seen. There were other corridors lighted with lamps; and then low galleries, which seemed to have no end. I knew it was forbidden to go farther. I was afraid and was about to turn back, but there was a sound of voices—though one could scarcely hear.

Ygra.—It must have been the servants of the Queen; they live at the foot of the tower.

Bel.—I do not know quite what it was. There must have been more than one door between; and the voices came to me like the voice of some one who is being strangled. I went as near as I could. I am not sure of anything; but I believe they were speaking of a child who had arrived to-day, and of a crown of gold. They seemed to be laughing.

Ygra.—They were laughing?

Bel.—Yes, I think they were laughing; unless it was that they were crying, or that it was something I did not understand; for one heard badly, and their voices were low. There seemed to be a great many of them moving about in the vault. They were speaking of the child that the Queen wished to see. They will probably come here this evening.

Ygra.—What? this evening?

Bel.—Yes, yes; I think so, yes.

Ygra.—Did they not mention any name?

Bel.—They spoke of a child—a little, little child.

Ygra.—There is no other child here.

Bel.—Just then they raised their voices a little, for one of them had doubted whether the day was come.

Ygra.—I know what that means, and it will not be the first time that they have left the tower. I knew only too well why she made him come, but I could not think she would show such haste as this! We shall see; there are three of us, and we have time.

Bel.—What do you mean to do?

Ygra.—I do not know yet what I shall do, but I shall surprise her. Do you know what that means, you who only can tremble? I will tell you.

Bel.—What?

Ygra.—She shall not take him without a struggle.

Bel.—We are alone, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—Ah! it is true we are alone! There is only one thing to be done, and it never fails us! Let us wait on our knees as we did before. Perhaps she will have pity! She allows herself to be moved by tears. We must grant her everything she asks; she will smile, perhaps; and it is her habit to spare all who kneel. All these years she has been there in her enormous tower, devouring those we love, and not a single one has dared strike her in the face. She lies on our soul like the stone of a tomb, and no one dares stretch out his arm. In the times when there were men here, they too were afraid, and fell upon their faces. To-day it is the woman's turn; we shall see. It is time that some one should dare to rise. No one knows on what her power rests, and I will no longer live in the shadow of her tower. Go away, if you two can only tremble like this—go away, both of you, and leave me still more alone. I will wait for her.

Bel.—Sister, I do not know what has to be done, but I will wait with you.

Aglovale.—I, too, will wait, my daughter. My soul has long been ill at ease. You will try; we have tried more than once.

Ygra.—You have tried—you also?

Aglo.—They have all tried. But at the last moment their strength has failed them. You, too, you shall see. If she were to command me to go up to her this very evening, I would put my two hands together and say nothing; and my weary feet would climb the staircase, without lingering and without hastening, though I know full well that none come down again with eyes unclosed. There is no courage left in me against her; our hands are helpless, and can touch no one. Other hands than these are wanted, and all is useless. But you are hopeful, and I will assist you. Close the doors, my child. Awaken Tintagiles; bare your little arms and enfold him within them, and take him on your knees—we have no other defense.

ACT III.

SCENE—The same room.

Ygraine and Aglovale.

Ygraine.—I have been to look at the doors. There are three of them. We will watch the large one. The two others are low and heavy. They are never opened. The keys were lost long ago, and the iron bars are sunk into the walls. Help me close this door; it is heavier than the gate of a city. It is massive; the lightning itself could not pierce through it. Are you prepared for all that may happen?

Aglovale.—(Seating himself on the threshold.) I will go seat myself on the steps; my sword across my knees. I do not think this is the first time that I have waited and watched here, my child; and there are moments when one does not understand all that one remembers. I have done all this before, I do not know when; but I have never dared draw my sword. Now, it lies there before me, though my arms no longer have strength; but I intend to try. It is perhaps time that men should defend themselves, even though they do not understand.

(Bellangère, carrying Tintagiles in her arms, comes out of the adjoining room.)

Bellangère.—He was awake.

Ygra.—He is pale; what ails him?

Bel.—I do not know; he was very silent. He was crying.

Ygra.—Tintagiles.

Bel.—He is looking away from you.

Ygra.—He does not seem to know me.—Tintagiles, where are you? It is your sister who speaks to you. What are you looking at so fixedly? Turn around; come, I will play with you.

Tintagiles.—No, no.

Ygra.—You do not want to play?

Tin.—I cannot stand, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—You cannot stand? Come, come, what is the matter with you? Are you suffering any pain?

Tin.—Yes.

Ygra.—Tell me where it is, Tintagiles, and I will cure you.

Tin.—I cannot tell you, sister Ygraine—everywhere.

Ygra.—Come to me, Tintagiles. You know that my arms are softer, and I will put them around you, and you will feel better at once.—Give him to me, Bellangère. He shall sit on my knee, and the pain will go.—There, you see? Your big sisters are here. They are close to you; we will defend you, and no evil can come near.

Tin.—It has come, sister Ygraine. Why is there no light, sister Ygraine?

Ygra.—There is a light, my child. Do you not see the lamp that hangs from the rafters?

Tin.—Yes, yes; it is not large. Are there no others?

Ygra.—Why should there be others? We can see what we have to see.

Tin.—Ah!

Ygra.—Oh! your eyes are deep.

Tin.—So are yours, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—I did not notice it this morning. I have just seen in your eyes. We do not quite know what the soul thinks it sees.

Tin.—I have not seen the soul, sister Ygraine. But why is Aglovale on the threshold?

Ygra.—He is resting a little. He wanted to kiss you before going to bed; he was waiting for you to wake.

Tin.—What has he on his knees?

Ygra.—On his knees? I see nothing on his knees.

Tin.—Yes, yes; there is something.

Aglo.—It is nothing, my child. I was looking at my old sword; and I scarcely recognize it. It has served me many years, but for a long time past I have lost confidence in it, and I think it is going to break. Here, just by the hilt, there is a little stain. I had noticed that the steel was growing paler, and I asked myself; I do not remember what I asked myself. My soul is very heavy to-day. What is one to do? Men must needs live and await the unforeseen. And after that they must still act as if they hoped. There are sad evenings when our useless lives taste bitter in our mouths, and we would like to close our eyes. It is late, and I am tired.

Tin.—He has wounds, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—Where?

Tin.—On his forehead and on his hands.

Aglo.—Those are very old wounds, from which I suffer no longer, my child. The light must be falling on them this evening. You had not noticed them before?

Tin.—He looks sad, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—No no; he is not sad, but very weary.

Tin.—You too are sad, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—Why no, why no; look at me, I am smiling.

Tin.—And my other sister, too.

Ygra.—Oh no, she too is smiling.

Tin.—No, that is not a smile; I know.

Ygra.—Come, kiss me, and think of something else.

(She kisses him.)

Tin.—Of what shall I think, sister Ygraine?—Why do you hurt me when you kiss me?

Ygra.—Did I hurt you?

Tin.—Yes. I do not know why I hear your heart beat, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—Do you hear it beat?

Tin.—Oh! Oh! it beats as though it wanted to——

Ygra.—What?

Tin.—I do not know, sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—It is wrong to be frightened without reason, and to speak in riddles. Oh! your eyes are full of tears. Why are you unhappy? I hear your heart beating, now; people always hear them when they hold one another so close. It is then that the heart speaks and says things that the tongue does not know.

Tin.—I heard nothing before.

Ygra.—That was because—— Oh! but your heart! What is the matter? It is bursting!

Tin.—(Crying.) Sister Ygraine! sister Ygraine!

Ygra.—What is it?

Tin.—I have heard. They—they are coming!

Ygra.—Who? Who are coming? What has happened?

Tin.—The door! the door! They are there!

(He falls backwards on to Ygraine's knees.)

Ygra.—What is it? He has—he has fainted.

Bel.—Take care—take care. He will fall.

Aglo.—(Rising brusquely, his sword in his hand.) I, too, can hear—there are steps in the corridor.

Ygra.—Oh! (A moment's silence; they all listen.)

Aglo.—Yes, I hear. There is a crowd of them.

Ygra.—A crowd—a crowd—how?

Aglo.—I do not know; one hears and one does not hear. They do not move like other creatures, but they come. They are touching the door.

Ygra.—(Clasping Tintagiles in her arms.) Tintagiles! Tintagiles!

el.—(Embracing him.) Let me, too! let me!—Tintagiles!

Aglo.—They are shaking the door—listen—do not breathe. They are whispering.

(A key is heard turning harshly in the lock.)

Ygra.—They have the key!

Aglo.—Yes, yes; I was sure of it. Wait. (He plants himself, with sword outstretched, on the last step.—To the two sisters:) Come! come both!

(For a moment there is silence. The door opens slowly.

Aglovale thrusts his sword wildly through the opening, driving the point between the beams. The sword breaks with a loud report under the silent pressure of the timber, and the pieces of steel roll down the steps with a resounding clang. Ygraine leaps up, carrying in her arms Tintagiles, who has fainted; and she, Bellangère and Aglovale, putting forth all their strength, try, but in vain, to close the door, which slowly opens wider and wider, although no one can be seen or heard. Only a cold and calm light penetrates into the room. At this moment Tintagiles, suddenly stretching out his limbs, regains consciousness, sends forth a long cry of deliverance, and embraces his sister—and at this very instant the door, which resists no longer, falls to brusquely under their pressure, which they have not had time to stop.)

Ygra.—Tintagiles!

(They look with amazement at each other.)

Aglo.—(Waiting at the door.) I hear nothing now.

Ygra.—(Wild with joy.) Tintagiles! Tintagiles! Look! Look! He is saved! Look at his eyes; you can see the blue. He is going to speak. They saw we were watching. They did not dare. Kiss us! Kiss us, I say! Kiss us! All! all! Down to the depths of our soul! (All four, their eyes full of tears, fall into each other's arms.)

ACT IV.

SCENE—A corridor in front of the room in which last Act took place.

Three Servants of the Queen enter. They are all veiled, and their long black robes flow down to the ground.

1st Servant.—(Listening at the door.) They are not watching.

2d Servant.—We need not have waited.

3d Servant.—She prefers that it should be done in silence.

1st Serv.—I knew that they must fall asleep.

2d Serv.—Quick! open the door.

3d Serv.—It is time.

1st Serv.—Wait there; I will enter alone. There is no need for three of us.

2d Serv.—You are right; he is very small.

3d Serv.—You must be careful with the elder sister.

2d Serv.—Remember, the Queen does not want them to know.

1st Serv.—Have no fear; people seldom hear my coming.

2d Serv.—Go in then; it is time.

(The First Servant opens the door cautiously and goes into the room.)

It is close on midnight.

3d Serv.—Ah!

(A moment's silence. The First Servant comes out of the room.)

2d Serv.—Where is he?

1st Serv.—He is asleep between his sisters. His arms are around their necks; and their arms enfold him. I cannot do it alone.

2d Serv.—I will help you.

3d Serv.—Yes; do you go together. I will keep watch here.

1st Serv.—Be careful; they seem to know. They were all three struggling with a bad dream.

(The two Servants go into the room.)

3d Serv.—People always know; but they do not understand.

(A moment's silence. The First and Second Servants come out of the room again.)

3d Serv.—Well?

2d Serv.—You must come, too; we cannot separate them.

1st Serv.—No sooner do we unclasp their arms than they fall back around the child.

2d Serv.—And the child nestles closer and closer to them.

1st Serv.—He is lying with his forehead on the elder sister's heart.

2d Serv.—And his head rises and falls on her bosom.

1st Serv.—We shall not be able to open his hands.

2d Serv.—They are plunged deep down into his sisters' hair.

1st Serv.—He holds one golden curl between his little teeth.

2d Serv.—We shall have to cut the elder sister's hair.

1st Serv.—And the other sister's, too, you will see.

2d Serv.—Have you your scissors?

3d Serv.—Yes.

1st Serv.—Come quickly; they have begun to move.

2d Serv.—Their hearts and their eyelids are throbbing together.

1st Serv.—Yes; I caught a glimpse of the elder girl's blue eyes.

2d Serv.—She looked at us but did not see us.

1st Serv.—If one touches one of them, the other two tremble.

2d Serv.—They are trying hard, but they cannot stir.

1st Serv.—The elder sister wishes to scream, but she cannot.

2d Serv.—Come quickly; they seem to know.

3d Serv.—Where is the old man?

1st Serv.—He is asleep—away from the others.

2d Serv.—He sleeps, his forehead resting on the hilt of his sword.

1st Serv.—He knows of nothing; and he has no dreams.

3d Serv.—Come, come, we must hasten.

1st Serv.—You will find it difficult to separate their limbs.

2d Serv.—They are clutching at each other as though they were drowning.

3d Serv.—Come, come.

(They go in. The silence is broken only by sighs and low murmurs of suffering, held in thrall by sleep. Then the three Servants emerge very hurriedly from the gloomy room. One of them carries Tintagiles, who is fast asleep, in her arms. From his little hands, twitching in sleep, and his mouth, drawn in agony, a glittering stream of golden tresses, ravished from the heads of his sisters, flows down to the ground. The Servants hurry on. There is perfect silence; but no sooner have they reached the end of the corridor than Tintagiles awakes and sends forth a cry of supreme distress.)

Tintagiles.—(From the end of the corridor.) Aah!

(There is again silence. Then from the adjoining room the two sisters are heard moving about restlessly.)

Ygraine.—(In the room.) Tintagiles! where is he?

Bellangère.—He is not here.

Ygra.—(With growing anguish.) Tintagiles! A lamp, a lamp! Light it!

Bel.—Yes—yes.

(Ygraine is seen coming out of the room with the lighted lamp in her hand.)

Ygra.—The door is wide open!

(The voice of Tintagiles, almost inaudible, in the distance.)

Tin.—Sister Ygraine!

Ygra.—He calls! He calls! Tintagiles! Tintagiles!

(She rushes into the corridor. Bellangère tries to follow, but falls fainting on the threshold.)

ACT V.

SCENE—Before a great iron door in a gloomy vault.

Enter Ygraine, haggard and dishevelled, with a lamp in her hand.

Ygraine.—(Turning wildly to and fro.) They have not followed me! Bellangère! Bellangère! Aglovale! Where are they? They said they loved him and they leave me alone! Tintagiles! Tintagiles! Oh! I remember; I have climbed steps without number, between great pitiless walls, and my heart bids me live no longer. These vaults seem to move. (She supports herself against the pillars.) I am falling. Oh! oh! my poor life! I can feel it—it is trembling on my lips—it wants to depart. I know not what I have done; I have seen nothing, I have heard nothing. Oh, this silence! All along the steps and all along the walls I found these golden curls, and I followed them. I picked them up. Oh! oh! they are very pretty! Little childie—little childie—what was I saying? I remember; I do not believe in it. When one sleeps—all that has no importance and is not possible. Of what am I thinking? I do not know. One awakes, and then— After all—come, after all—I must think this out. Some say one thing, some say the other; but the way of the soul is quite different. When the chain is removed, there is much more than one knows. I came here with my little lamp. It did not go out, in spite of the wind on the staircase. And then, what is one to think? There are so many things which are vague. There must be people who know them; but why do they not speak? (She looks around her.) I have never seen all this before. It is difficult to get so far—and it is all forbidden. How cold it is; and so dark that one is afraid to breathe. They say there is poison in these gloomy shadows. That door looks very terrible. (She goes up to the door and touches it.) Oh! how cold it is. It is of iron—solid iron—and there is no lock. How can they open it? I see no hinges; I suppose it is sunk into the wall. This is as far as one can go. There are no more steps. (Suddenly sending forth a terrible shriek.) Ah! more golden hair between the panels! Tintagiles! Tintagiles! I

heard the door close just now—I remember! I remember! It must be! (She beats frantically against the door with hands and feet.) Oh, monster! monster! It is here that I find you! Listen! I blaspheme! I blaspheme and spit on you!

(Feeble knocks are heard from the other side of the door: then the voice of Tintagiles penetrates very feebly through the iron panels.)

Tin.—Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine!

Ygra.—Tintagiles! What! what! Tintagiles, is it you?

Tin.—Quick, open, open! She is here!

Ygra.—Oh! oh! Who? Tintagiles my little Tintagiles, can you hear me? What is it? What has happened? Tintagiles! Have they hurt you? Where are you? Are you there?

Tin.—Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine! Open for me—or I shall die.

Ygra.—I will try—wait, wait. I will open it, I will open it.

Tin.—But you do not understand! Sister Ygraine! There is no time to lose! She tried to hold me back! I struck her, struck her; I ran. Quick, quick, she is coming!

Ygra.—Yes, yes,—where is she?

Tin.—I can see nothing, but I hear—oh, I am afraid, sister Ygraine, I am afraid. Quick, quick! Quick, open! for the dear Lord's sake, sister Ygraine!

Ygra.—(Anxiously groping along the door.) I am sure to find it. Wait a little—a minute—a second.

Tin.—I cannot, sister Ygraine. I can feel her breath on me now.

Ygra.—It is nothing, Tintagiles, my little Tintagiles; do not be frightened—if I could only see.

Tin.—Oh, but you can see—I can see your lamp from here. It is quite light where you are, sister Ygraine. Here I can see nothing.

Ygra.—You see me, Tintagiles? How can you see? There is not a crack in the door.

Tin.—Yes, yes, there is; but it is so small!

Ygra.—On which side? Is it here—tell me, tell me—or is it over there?

Tin.—It is here. Listen, listen! I am knocking.

Ygra.—Here?

Tin.—Higher up. But it is so small; a needle could not go through!

Ygra.—Do not be afraid, I am here.

Tin.—Oh, I know, sister Ygraine! Pull! pull! You must pull! She is coming! If you could only open a little—a very little. I am so small!

Ygra.—My nails are broken, Tintagiles. I have pulled, I have pushed, I have struck with all my might—with all my might! (She strikes again, and tries to shake the massive door.) Two of my fingers are numbed. Do not cry. It is of iron.

Tin.—(Sobbing in despair.) You have nothing to open with, sister Ygraine? nothing at all, nothing at all? I could get through—I am so small, so very small—you know how small I am.

Ygra.—I have only my lamp, Tintagiles. There! there! (She aims repeated blows at the gate with her earthenware lamp, which goes out and breaks, the pieces falling to the ground.) Oh! it has all grown dark! Tintagiles, where are you? Oh! listen, listen! Can you not open from the inside?

Tin.—No, no; there is nothing. I cannot feel anything at all. I cannot see the light through the crack any more.

Ygra.—What is the matter, Tintagiles? I can scarcely hear you.

Tin.—Little sister, sister Ygraine. It is too late now.

Ygra.—What is it, Tintagiles? Where are you going?

Tin.—She is here! Oh, I am so weak. Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine. I feel her on me!

Ygra.—Whom? whom?

Tin.—I do not know—I cannot see. But it is too late now. She—she is taking me by the throat. Her hand is at my throat. Oh, oh, sister Ygraine, come to me!

Ygra.—Yes, yes.

Tin.—It is so dark.

Ygra.—Struggle—fight—tear her to pieces! Do not be afraid. Wait a moment! I am here. Tintagiles? Tintagiles! answer me! Help!!! where are you? I will come to you—kiss me—through the door—here, here.

Tin.—(Very feebly.) Here—here—sister Ygraine.

Ygra.—I am putting my kisses on this spot here, do you understand? Again, again!

Tin.—(More and more feebly.) Mine too—here—sister Ygraine! Sister Ygraine! Oh!

(The fall of a little body is heard behind the iron door.)

Ygra.—Tintagiles! Tintagiles! What have you done? Give him back, give him back! for the love of God give him back to me! I can hear nothing. What are doing with him? You will not hurt him? He is only a little child; he cannot resist. Look! look! I mean no harm. I am on my knees. Give him back to us, I beg of you. Not for my sake only, you know it well. I will do anything. I bear no ill-will, you see. I implore you with clasped hands. I was wrong. I am quite resigned, you see. I have lost all I had. You should punish me some other way. There are so many things which would hurt me more—if you want to hurt me. You shall see. But this poor child has done no harm. What I said was not true—but I did not know. I know that you are very good. Surely the time for forgiveness has come! He is so young and beautiful, and he is so small! You must see that it cannot be! He puts his little arms around your neck; his little mouth on your mouth; and God Himself could not say him nay. You will open the door, will you not? I am asking so little. I want him for an instant, just for an instant. I cannot remember. You will understand. I did not have time. He can get through the tiniest opening. It is not difficult. (A long inexorable silence.) Monster! Monster! Curse you! Curse you! I spit on you!

(She sinks down and continues to sob softly, her arms outspread against the gate, in the gloom.)

THE YOKE

(LE JOUG)

OF

M. ALBERT GUINON AND MME. J. MARNI.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JULIETTE GAMBIER, 21.

MME. GAMBIER (Armandine), 54.

MME. DE BRAUVER, 32.

ANNA ROMPEL, 21.

ELISE VERVEINE, 32.

ROSALIE CERNEAU, 21.

MARIA, 21.

HENRI COURTIAL, 42.

JACQUES ARRIVEL, 42.

GUSTAVE, Valet de Chamber.

PRELUDE

"All rests with those who read. A work or thought
Is what each makes it to himself, and may
Be full of great dark meanings, like the sea,
With shoals of life rushing."

So run some richly-freighted lines from "Festus"—that noble poem now fallen into undeserved neglect—lines true of all literature, but especially applicable to the French. Generally regarded by international critics as the most artistic literature in the world, there is nevertheless a superficial lightness about it, an apparent frivolity, a sensuousness well calculated to deceive the light-weight thinker into a belief that it lacks essential depth and moral purpose. Yet, with reference to this particular play, we feel assured that the most casual, unheeding reader can scarcely fail to recognize the strong underlying moral purpose. "This is a brilliant study in psychology, in sociology and manners in the larger sense rather than a comedy properly so called," declared the astute Academician, Emile Faguet, on the morrow of its first production in Paris, November 28, 1902. "But," he continues, "it is a dramatic study true to life, extremely penetrating and profound, with a slow yet stronger and stronger progression to its terrible

dénouement—a development infinitely interesting to follow. It is a play that satisfies in us a sentiment scarcely charitable but essentially just. We are enchanted that a 'viveur,' rich, idle, useless, vain and insolent, is punished in middle life by the punishment especially reserved by Providence to rich, idle, useless, vain and insolent 'viveurs.' No one dreams of complaining at his chastisement. The drama contains a very salutary moral lesson, and it should be the duty of every nephew that has an uncle verging on fifty to see that he be made acquainted with the piece. Literally, words are lacking to properly express how admirable Mme. Réjane was in the rôle of Juliette. 'Twas a miracle. Incontestably, Mme. Réjane is the first actress in Europe. . . . And the drama, in its way, is a masterpiece—a play of the first order—intensely interesting from beginning to end."

ACT I.

A richly appointed cabinet de toilette. Henri in white flannels is exercising as the curtain rises, while Gustave is closing the curtains concealing the douche and tidying up the considerably disordered room.

Henri.—I don't know what's the matter with me this morning, I cannot get warmed up—I'm frozen.

Gustave.—Monsieur's reaction is not progressing satisfactorily?

Henri.—It's not progressing at all.—Light the fire.

Gust.—Ah! I had quite forgotten to tell you, sir, there's no more wood.

Henri.—What, no more wood?—and that bill for 615 francs I paid but yesterday?

Gust.—Was for last year's supply, sir.

Henri.—I burned 615 francs' worth of wood last year?

Gust.—Wood and charcoal—yes, sir. Monsieur and the kitchen stove together. To be entirely just, it must be admitted that the kitchen stove devoured quite as much, indeed rather more than Monsieur himself.

Henri.—It strikes me as excessive just the same.

Gust.—Not at all, sir. If Monsieur will but inquire—one cannot burn less. Ugenie certainly has her faults; she's a sot and a liar—dirty and disgusting, but she does not abuse the kitchen charcoal, sir.

Henri.—Well, confound it, build a fire somehow.

Gust.—Very well, sir—But won't Monsieur have his café au lait meanwhile?

Henri.—Yes, bring it in. (Gustave leaves. Henri walks to and fro to get warm, then sits before a mirror and regards himself attentively.) What a mien! (He looks at his teeth.) The gums are shrinking—yes, there's no doubt of it, actually shrinking! (He touches a tooth.) And it moves—a front tooth, too! (He regards his hair.) And my hair is thinning out, too! Just see that streak! Looks like a country lane! Ah, I'm getting faded—worn-out. At forty-two!—Not to be wondered at, though, considering the absurd life I lead.

Enter Gustave.

Gustave.—Here's your café au lait, sir, and your mail. I found three bundles of wood. (He kneels down to make the fire. The door bell rings violently.)

Henri.—Gustave, someone rings. Open the door.

Gust.—Yes, sir. (He leaves leisurely. Henri begins to eat.)

Enter Gustave and Elise Verveine.

Gustave.—Mlle. Elise Verveine.

Henri.—What! you? At this hour!

Elise.—(Dryly.) Yes, good morning.

Henri.—Good morning, dearie. (He rises and embraces

her.) Well, what's up? For some thing must have gone wrong, eh, to bring you out so early?

Elise.—Quite right!—But really it's not at all warm here. You'll permit me, will you not, to keep my wraps on?

Henri.—I'll beg you to do so. Loan me your muff, won't you? My fingers are numb.

Elise.—Certainly. (She hands it to him.)

Gust.—Ah, it's started at last. (He places the blower before the open-grate and leaves.)

Henri.—Well, I'm all ears now—What's the trouble?

Elise.—The trouble is—I don't like to be bamboozled.

Henri.—I can easily understand that—Who has had the impudence?

Elise.—You; last night—Oh don't look so astonished—I mean you.

Henri.—But how? Even had I so wished, it would have been impossible for me to bamboozle you last night, considering that I was not with you.

Elise.—True enough; You were with a hussy.

Henri.—I was with my sister, Madam de Soile—But why do you look that way, don't you believe me?

Elise.—Not in the least. She hasn't a feature that resembles yours.

Henri.—So much the better for her.

Elise.—My dear fellow, when one wishes to pass off some woman for a sister, one should at least resemble her.

Henri.—Still it's hardly my fault—the fault is my father's—But really, I can scarcely suppose that you have come out thus early in the morning simply to rail at my sister?

Elise.—'Tis true—but why did you not tell me yesterday that you were going to the Gymnase with your sister, since you will term her so?

Henri.—Because I did not know it myself—It was decided at the last moment; after dinner.

Elise.—Indeed, and where did you dine?

Henri.—At Durand's.

Elise.—And where, there?

Henri.—Where, there? I've just told you: at Durand's.

Elise.—I understood you perfectly, I'm not deaf! I asked: where, there? In the public dining-hall or in a private room?

Henri.—In a salon. My brother-in-law and sister preferred a salon.

Elise.—The complaisant husband!

Henri.—Now, that's quite enough, *Elise*. I beg you——

Elise.—Enough, is it?—Am I not to be permitted to express an opinion about a near relative of the family?—Perhaps I shall be required to cross myself when speaking of him—— Really you make me laugh.

Henri.—That's right; let's laugh.

Elise.—You imbecile! (She rises.) Then it doesn't interest you at all to know why I was at the *Gymnase* yesterday and how I was able to see you?

Henri.—Oh yes, certainly, of course—Why were you at the *Gymnase* yesterday? and how were you able to see me?

Elise.—(Bitterly.) You ask with such an air! I can scarcely perceive that 'tis quite an indifferent matter to you. I might have ten lovers at a time without your losing a mouthful—I am indeed silly, twice silly, to be faithful to you for such slender returns.

Henri.—Still, if my memory serves me, you pocketed a check from lovey-dovey last Thursday, which, if I may be permitted to so express myself, hardly smelled of the proletariat.

Elise.—'Tis the thought of a parvenu, that! Never a chic man, truly chic, would throw in one's teeth what he does for her.

Henri.—You make me tired, very tired—ever since you've been here you've said nothing but disagreeable things. What are you driving at? Out with it, fair and plump.

Elise.—That's right, be cross, churlish! So I make you tired, do I? Well, my dear, I shall tire you no longer. I'm going. Give me my muff.

Henri.—Well, here it is. (Offering it.)

Elise.—You'll regret me, remember that.

Henri.—Probably. (He eats a roll.)

Elise.—A thousand times more than I shall regret you.

Henri.—Certainly.

Elise.—Then you are quitting me?

Henri.—As you wish.

Elise.—As I wi——! (She goes toward the door then returns.) You must love her, this creature, very dearly indeed, to treat me in this manner.

Henri.—What creature?

Elise.—Why, your fashionable woman. Oh, I know all, I've learned everything. Dare you deny it?

Henri.—I dare. I do deny it.

Elise.—(Very quickly.) She calls herself Madam de Brauver. She lives 339 bis rue de Lille. Am I well informed, eh? Thirty years, peroxide blond—gets her corsets rue de la Paix—Parenthetically, she's somewhat deformed.

Henri.—What nonsense! She has a charming figure.

Elise.—Charming? With one hip larger than the other! —Just ask Madam Beurrier which of us two, this Brauver or me, has the finer form; then you'll see!

Henri.—And who is Madam Buerrier, pray?

Elise.—My corset maker and that of Madam de Brauver also. You will kindly permit me, won't you, to feel more confidence in the taste and judgment of Madam Beurrier than in your taste and judgment? When your eyes shall have rested upon an equal number of women in chemise, then shall you give me your opinion. Meanwhile, I'm off—You know where I live; should you desire to see me.

Henri.—Au revoir. (She leaves.) Ouf!—What a relief! (He writes a telegram. The bell rings.)

Enter Gustave and Madam de Brauver.

Gustave.—Madam de Brauver.

Henri.—(Very surprised.) What you, my dear?

Mad. de B.—Why yes, I. (She offers him her hand which he kisses respectfully as Gustave leaves. Then she offers Henri her cheek which he kisses.) Bonjour, my love. Feeling well to-day?

Henri.—No, wretched. I awakened this morning with a terrible headache—and after my douche, believe me, I was not able to get warmed up.

Mad. de B.—How droll! Why, I'm always fairly boiling after my douche—fairly boiling, you know. But say, you've no idea what I've come to propose—something very amusing. Guess where we're to breakfast.

Henri.—At your home, I imagine, since I've loaned you Ugenie, your cook being sick.

Mad. de B.—Oh no; at Chantilly; we're to breakfast at Chantilly, all in a bunch. The de Frenloxes, the de Morselles and the Richardsons. We're to leave in auto from the Place Royale at ten, breakfast at Chantilly, leave at four and dine all together this evening at Montrouge.

Henri.—At Montrouge?

Mad. de B.—Yes. Just fancy, little Richardson has discovered an extraordinary host—positively it isn't known whether he is man or woman—He dresses as a man, but he has a chignon, a magnificent chignon and diamond ear rings—just fancy! We have decided to make him dine with us. At dessert we shall ask him to sing. He has a soprano's voice.

Henri.—(Sullenly.) Well, that's just like one of Richardson's ideas. To take women of recognized social position, married women, to a dive like that.

Mad. de B.—Ah, you know it?

Henri.—No, but I can fancy it from here; it must be rotten. And you really desire to visit that place, you?

Mad. de B.—Desire? Why I'm fairly dying to go.

Henri.—Well, it's no fit place for you, I assure you.

Mad. de B.—As fit for me as for Madam de Frenlox, Madam de Morselle and the others as well, who will be there with their husbands.

Henri.—That's just it. They will have their husbands, while you—In short, don't count on me for to-night; as I

said before, I'm sick and I want to stay home and look after myself.

Mad. de B.—You sick? Pahaw, you're the picture of health.

Henri.—(Offering his wrist.) Feel my pulse.

Mad. de B.—Well, it's quite normal. (She counts.) One, two, three—you have the pulse of a nursing kid; while mine—still I don't complain or pay any attention to it. You're an imaginary sick man. Come, come, stir yourself. I'll allow you half an hour to dress.

Henri.—No, I cannot—I'm shivering now—I prefer to remain in my chimney corner.

Mad. de B.—But after all you would not have remained here in your chimney corner since you were to breakfast with me this morning.

Henri.—True, but at the very moment you rang I was writing this telegram. Take it and read.

Mad. de B.—(Reads, then very dignified.) You are indeed amiable. Many thanks. Then you were to be so boorish as to decline at the very last moment?

Henri.—But since I—

Mad. de B.—Without asking yourself what other people might think of this lack of consideration in respect to me?

Henri.—It isn't a question of—

Mad. de B.—Perchance you do not feel that I am sufficiently abandoned by my husband? You, also, wish to humiliate me by your indifference?

Henri.—Where's the indifference? I certainly have a right to shiver, to have a headache, in a word to be sick.

Mad. de B.—No, you certainly have not the right. Really, will you kindly tell me what you do for me, what sacrifices you make?

Henri.—Why, I do simply everything to be agreeable to you.

Mad. de B.—(Shrugging her shoulders.) But particularize. Tell me one thing, just one; I ask but for one. Will you kindly mention what you have given me, apart from some trifling bibelots? Nothing but your time—time, that's all.

And this you regard as too much? You're trying to slide out now through a feigned sickness?

Henri.—Slide out through feigned sickness, when I'm positively shivering? By jove, this is too much! Slide out! You'd scarcely find many lovers that would accept the giddy life you've led me for the last eighteen months. If you're iron, I'm merely flesh. I see my finish.

Mad. de B.—(Haughtily.) Are you aware that you have made yourself simply ridiculous?

Henri.—It matters little. That isn't fatal in France.

Mad. de B.—Possibly not, but in love it is scarcely stimulating. This poor Monsieur who complains of being fatigued by a woman! How funny! And are you really as exhausted as all that? If this be so I must leave you to your herb tea and broth;—must choose another companion.

Henri.—(To himself.) "This merciless executioner."

Mad. de B.—What's that? Executioner?

Henri.—I was merely repeating a line of Baudelaire: "Under the lash of pleasure, this merciless executioner." An admirable line. Aren't you acquainted with it?

Mad. de B.—I had forgotten it—I frankly admit that I was thinking of quite a different subject than poetry—Well, yes or no, are you going to Chantilly with me?

Henri.—I'm sick.

Mad. de B.—And will you be cured by evening?

Henri.—To go to Montrouge and eat a beefsteak with the host of doubtful sex? No, I shall not be cured this evening. Indeed, I confess most humbly that I'm fatigued, worn-out.

Mad. de B.—(Icily.) And shall I send you my doctor?

Henri.—No, thanks, I've no need of drugs. A little sleep, some nourishing diet, some Vichy—

Mad. de B.—(Ironically.) And don't forget solitude. Believe me, solitude will prove particularly refreshing.

Henri.—Yes, I really believe that solitude—

Mad. de B.—You may depend upon my not troubling it—never troubling it.

Henri.—What, never? You're too kind.

Mad. de B.—I treat you as you deserve. Good-bye, Monsieur Courtial.

Henri.—Good-bye, Madam. (He opens the door and she leaves. He returns to the fire. A short silence.)

Enter Jacques.

Jacques.—I just met Madam de Brauver on the stairs. She did not deign to respond to my lifted hat. All off between you two?

Henri.—All off—Bonjour, old fellow, how did you get in? I heard no ring.

Jac.—The lady left the door open. But what's the matter? Are you ill?

Henri.—Yes and no. Won't you breakfast with me?

Jac.—Willingly. I came with the intention of asking a cutlet of you—But by jove, how annoyed you look.

Henri.—My dear fellow, I've had nothing but annoyances since I awakened. First Elise came and made an idiotic scene apropos of my sister.

Jac.—What piqued her?

Henri.—I haven't the slightest idea. She went off in a huff. We've broken.

Jac.—So it took a good turn then after all.

Henri.—And then Madam de Brauver followed.

Jac.—The agitated! Were God just, He would paralyse her limbs at least once a year.

Henri.—She actually wanted to carry me off to Chantilly this morning to breakfast with her set, and this evening to dine at Montrouge with a dive-keeper of doubtful sex!

Jac.—Disgusting! You turned her down?

Henri.—Naturally. The truth is, I'm getting played-out. I've got to live more at home and for myself.

Jac.—Like a clever egotist. Yes, you're right, there's nothing like egotism. It preserves a man as ice preserves meat.

Henri.—You've hit it.

Jac.—Unfortunately, 'tis only for the rich. Egotism is a luxury. The impecunious, the penniless like myself, are forced to occupy themselves with others—they need them but too badly.

Henri.—Yes, but by jove, that's egotism too.

Jac.—No—Something much more elementary, more simple—merely the instinct of preservation.

Henri.—But, sapristi! don't fret so. Don't be eternally repeating that you're penniless. You're all right. Am I not here?

Jac.—Yes, you're here, it's true; but during the seven years that have passed since you, if I may term it so, adopted me, my position even with your aid has been but little ameliorated. At forty-two I still remain in search of a social status.

Henri.—Here, your cover is always laid.

Jac.—In vain my good appetite. That's scarcely a profession.

Henri.—But you have one—the promotion of business enterprises. You need but one success to make you rich. You're certainly not lacking in ideas.

Jac.—No; but when I have a practical idea, it's not new, and when I have a new idea, it's not practical. In short, I am like the gentleman who is always at the point of closing an important deal, ever about to terminate a magnificent operation, but who meanwhile is not always able to change his paper collar. And to think that I should have perhaps made such a good roofer.

Henri.—Like your father? No, you are too absent-minded; you would have fallen from the roof.

Jac.—Possibly. Ah, my parents were much to blame for bringing me into the world. Still I pardon them; they knew not what they did.

Henri.—Yet you are not lacking in intelligence.

Jac.—Don't mention that! 'Tis the cause of all my trouble. Without my cursed intelligence, no scholarships, no prizes, no diplomas. I should have remained in my own environment; a mediocre workman, easily content with a fair wage and an occasional drunk. But, alas, 'tis too late.

Henri.—Don't speak ill of the schools. 'Tis there we became acquainted.

Jac.—True. I little thought in those days that 'twould prove the sole utility that I should ever gain from my Latin.

Henri.—(Stretching and yawning.) Jacques, I'm suffering from ennui. See if you can make me laugh.

Jac.—Ah, patron, what may I offer Monsieur?

Henri.—Whatever you like. (He yawns again.)

Jac.—Have you heard the story of Baroness Stourmbach and her footman?

Henri.—Oh you told me that already—last week.

Jac.—Yes, but there's two versions.

Henri.—That of the footman is quite sufficient for me. Don't you know anything else of the same nature?

Jac.—'Pon my word, no. The women are so awfully virtuous this week.

Henri.—Jacques, old man, you're neglecting yourself. Your stock of scandal is running down terribly.

Jac.—Yes, I'll have to change my café. (A silence.) By the way, can't you loan me a couple of louis?

Henri.—Get them from my vest pocket there.

Jac.—Thanks, I shall hand them over to a fellow some steps from here who is pressing me. I'll return at noon for breakfast. What are you to have?

Henri.—I'm sure I don't know. The cook's away. You look after it. Buy something—whatever you like—a fowl, some ham—

Jac.—All right. Shall I take, then, another louis?

Henri.—Yes. So long.

Enter Gustave.

Gustave.—Monsieur, Ugenie has returned and asks your orders. Then there's a woman who has come up the servant's stairway and who says that she knows you well and that you will receive her. She has written her name on this bit of paper. (Hands him a piece of wrapping paper.)

Henri.—(Reading.) "Armandine Gambier." Don't know her. Armandine Gambier. (Suddenly remembering.) Oh, yes, yes; Armandine, oh, yes. Bring her in. (To Jacques.) You give Ugenie her orders, won't you?

Jac.—Well, then, since I shall have nothing to buy. (Starts to put the louis back.)

Henri.—No, no, never mind, that's nothing, keep it. (Jacques pockets the louis and leaves.)

Enter Madam Gambier.

Madam Gambier.—(Timidly.) Don't you—don't you recognize me, Monsieur Courtial?

Henri.—(Hesitatingly.) Heavens!—Yes, I recognize you.

Mad. G.—You see I've changed a little in twenty years.

Henri.—Twenty years? Is it possible? Twenty years already?

Mad. G.—Yes, indeed; '82. January, 1882.

Henri.—Sit down.

Mad. G.—Thanks. (She seats herself.)

Henri.—January, 1882—that's right. It was as cold as—

Mad. G.—An iceberg. That's the very reason you offered a grog to Germaine and me in a café opposite the Odeon. When we were seated, we three, you said to us: "Doubtless you two are friends, are you not, that one may set off the charms of the other? I scarcely know which is the most charming." But you were not long in making up your mind, and Germaine was chosen. You thought me too thin.

Henri.—What a memory you have! What became of Germaine?

Mad. G.—She married a grocer, rue de Vaugirard. They're getting on splendidly.

Henri.—And you visit her frequently?

Mad. G.—Oh, no; she cannot permit me to visit her, considering her position; but we are still friendly when we chance to meet.

Henri.—And is she still pretty?

19—Vol. XXI.

Mad. G.—Oh, fairly so; except that her teeth are gone; she's nearly bald and her stomach is rather too much in evidence. But, to be just, her features are still regular.

Henri.—She had a medallion-like face.

Mad. G.—I thought you hadn't forgotten her. If he remembers Germaine, I said to myself, surely he'll remember me, for we were like two sisters, twins in friendship, so to speak, Germaine and me.

Henri.—Indeed, you were seldom apart.

Mad. G.—It commenced when we were merely frisky kids in the work-shop and, later on when we had decided to have our fling, we encouraged each other to take a male friend. Nor was one ever jealous of the other.

Henri.—Yes, but I recall that you had the better disposition.

Mad. G.—Because I was born good-natured. Ah, but it has cost me dear, my good nature. I must tell you about it, Monsieur Henri—You'll permit me, will you not, to call you Monsieur Henri?

Henri.—Certainly.

Mad. G.—Thanks. I'll frankly admit, Monsieur Henri, that, at bottom, carousing is not to my taste, and had I not had a baby to raise I should have remained tranquilly at work in the shop, where I could easily earn sufficient to keep myself. But the baby's board, soap, sugar and all the rest that fairly eat me alive, and I was bound, was I not, to do all in my power for my little Juliette, and so to go first with this one then with that? But somehow the liaisons never lasted.

Henri.—You were pretty, though.

Mad. G.—I was fresh, fair and rosy—but what does that amount to if ill-luck pursues one? At last, one fine day, I became acquainted with a gentleman from the Antilles, a gentleman almost black. Oh, not a nigger; just dark, very dark. He was alone in the world, this gentleman, alone and rich. And he attached himself to me—the first to grow really attached—and I was quite content. "Your fortune is made, Armandine," he said, "I shall never leave you." Good, I thought to myself, it's none too soon. A week afterwards

he fell sick. In less than twenty-four hours he recognized no one and he died without a whisper. Perhaps you think I inherited something? Well, Monsieur Henri, as true as my belief in God, upon my eternal salvation, I didn't get that. (Snaps her fingers.) The government took everything, and so, though I am not hateful by nature, I abominate the Republic. It robbed me of everything, saying that he had died without a will. In short, I found myself worse off than before, with my blood turned venom to boot. Without the help of a lady who lived on my floor, I should have lighted the charcoal brazier for sure. Through this lady I became acquainted with a journalist, who counselled me to place Juliette in the Conservatoire. Ah, Monsieur Henri, I wonder why they call that place the Conservatoire? What do they conserve? Not virtue, at any rate. My darling, who was as a diapered baby in innocence, lost there in a few weeks her only treasure. And with whom, do you suppose? With a good-for-nothing fellow, a tenor, named Saumon. How I cried! More, perhaps, than at the moment my nigger died. (Collecting herself.) He wasn't really a nigger, though; he was merely very, very dark. Oh, I nearly died. They sought a priest, the Abbe Bruyere, an angel descended from Heaven,—you know him, perhaps?

Henri.—No.

Mad. G.—It's unfortunate, for you might have asked him what condition I was in when he came to "extremeunction" me. Well Monsieur Henri, the Abbe Bruyere saved me. And then he secured me a place in the chapel of the Virgin and St. Joseph to hire-out chairs. I earn my living and should be quite content, were it not for my Juliette.

Henri.—Does she lead the gay and festive life?

Mad. G.—Oh, no, Monsieur Henri. Since her tenor she has been straight as a string. Only, she's bored—she cries, she'd like to go out, to drink in the fresh air, to live.

Henri.—Then you keep her shut up?

Mad. G.—I keep her shut up without shutting her up. She sews from seven in the morning till nine at night in a little convent rue de la Santé. To be quite just, it isn't a gay life. So, when, yesterday, she said to me: "The day after to-

morrow I shall be twenty-one and I mean to quit sewing," a shiver ran up and down my spine. And I reflected and reflected, until my head ached, and then I thought of you.

Henri.—Of me?

Mad. G.—Yes, I recalled how clever you were in other days to Germaine. And then, I've often met you, too, since then, with other high-toned gentlemen. It isn't possible they're all married, I thought—these gentlemen. Why shouldn't there be one who would be glad to settle down with a pleasant little woman, quite young, reasonable, economical—

Henri.—What are you driving at? You want one of my friends to marry your daughter?

Mad. G.—Marry her? Oh, no; not at all. I'm not so piggyish as that. I know that is not the sort of a thing that can be brought about in these days. I wish simply to spare Juliette what no one thought of sparing me—passing from Pierre to Paul, from Jacques to Raymond, from Jules to Philippe. 'Tis so sad to pass from hand to hand like a water-bucket at a fire. Do you catch my meaning, Monsieur Henri?

Henri.—Yes a serious attachment. It's not easy to bring about.

Mad. G.—Not when one is alone in the world as I am. But when one has many friends like you—

Henri.—(Laughing.) But my good woman, 'tis a rather curious service you ask of me. Reflect, I cannot procure a lover for your daughter, really.

Mad. G.—Procure, no. But present her to your friends, that you can surely do. And if among your friends some worthy gentleman should become attached to her, should afford her a tranquil, an honorable life, would you not be happy in the knowledge that you had saved a poor girl from sinking into the mire?

Henri.—Really, you're astonishing. And your Abbe, what figure does he cut in this? Is he acquainted with your projects?

Mad. G.—No, no. A saint. He wants Juliette to become a nun.

Henri.—And she refuses?

Mad. G.—(Simply.) 'Tis not her vocation. (A silence.)
Monsieur Henri, have pity on her.

Henri.—But I don't know anyone—Besides, really I—

Mad. G.—Have pity on her, *Monsieur Henri*.

Henri.—Well, give me time to think it over—But, in the first place, is she pretty? Bring her here some morning.

Mad. G.—Wouldn't you like to see her now?

Henri.—What! Is she already here?

Mad. G.—She's down stairs waiting for me on the sidewalk.

Henri.—(Under his breath.) On the sidewalk! (Aloud.) But it's awfully cold, she must be frozen.

Mad. G.—Oh, she's young. Her blood is brisk. You'll permit me to go get her?

Henri.—But—

Mad. G.—I beg—I pray—Permit me to add, that it won't cost you anything to see her.

Henri.—(Resigned.) Very well, then; go ahead.

Mad. G.—(Leaving rapidly.) Oh, thanks; many thanks, *Monsieur Henri*.

Enter *Madam Gambier* and *Juliette*.

Henri.—Ah, bonjour, *Mademoiselle*.

Juliette.—(Smiling.) Bonjour, *Monsieur*.

Henri.—(To *Madam Gambier*.) She's rather attractive. (They all laugh. To *Juliette*.) Sewing doesn't please you any longer, eh?

Jul.—Not much, *Monsieur*.

Henri.—Your mamma tells me that you wish to do something else. What, for example?

Jul.—I don't know.

Mad. G.—Yes, yes, tell your ideas to *Monsieur*.

Jul.—And you won't kid me? Well, then, here they are. I'd like to have an apartment not too high up, bright and

pretty and live there with someone who would love me well. I've his tintype here in my upper story.

Mad. G.—(Reproachfully.) Juliette! (To Henri.) It was at the Conservatoire, you know, Monsieur Henri, that she learned such expressions.

Henri.—(Amused.) Oh, let her talk.

Jul.—I've his tintype in my head, full length; a fine, distinguished looking man, with a large moustache and small feet, a serious character and no taste for liquor and, particularly, he mustn't be a yard-stick dude.

Henri.—(Laughing.) No yard-stick dude, it's understood; but who, then, a mechanic?

Jul.—(With a grimace.) Oh, no.

Henri.—But tell me, why not? A blacksmith, an engineer? They make good money.

Jul.—Oh, they have such dirty trades. They'd make me all dirty when they embraced me.

Henri.—But they'd clean up before they embraced you.

Jul.—Then I'd have to wait, and I don't like waiting. I want someone who can embrace me at no matter what moment; whenever I desire it.

Mad. G.—(Reproachfully.) Juliette! (To Henri.) You inspire her with confidence, Monsieur Henri. I've never heard her say such things before.

Henri.—She's very droll. (To Juliette.) Then, if it's not to be a clerk or a mechanic, you want a gentleman?

Jul.—Oh, but a gentleman wouldn't want me.

Henri.—Why not?

Jul.—On account of this. (Pointing to her index finger.) See the needle pricks. (Passing her finger over the back of his hand.) Feel them? Like a file, eh?

Henri.—(Laughing.) Oh, a little paté d'amandes will make that all right immediately. Would you like some?

Jul.—Oh, yes, yes. Very much.

Mad. G.—(Reproachfully.) Juliette! (To Henri.) Monsieur Henri, pray pardon her. She speaks before she thinks.

She is, if I may say so, younger than her years. (To her daughter.) Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Come, now that Monsieur Henri has seen you, we mustn't take up any more of his time. You'll remember her, will you not, Monsieur Henri?

Jul.—Are we going already?

Henri.—Would you like to remain a little longer?

Jul.—(Looking at her mother.) Yes, but—

Henri.—Well, then, remain. Really, I'm not feeling very well this morning and you can keep me company.

Jul.—That's the very thing: I'll take care of you. I'm clever taking care of the sick, ain't I, mamma?

Mad. G.—The fact is, Monsieur Henri, that when I was sick, she never went to bed for eighteen days and nights. And you ought to have seen her mornings; fresh as a rose bud.

Jul.—It's because I'm strong in spite of my delicate appearance. My greatest strength, although you'd hardly think so, I look so slender, is in my legs.

Henri.—(Interested.) Really?

Jul.—(With a frank air.) Yes, my calves are simply like iron.

Mad. G.—Juliette! (To Henri.) Then she really doesn't discommode you?

Henri.—Not at all. I'm expecting a friend. She can breakfast with us.

Mad. G.—You're very kind. I've a burial at eleven and I'll return for her at two. (To Juliette.) Good bye my dear, and above all, don't be indiscreet. (She leaves.)

Enter Jacques.

Henri.—Say, Jacques, you remember Germaine, my good comrade in the Latin-quarter when I was a student?

Jacques.—Oh, yes; that girl that resembled a Byzantine painting and talked through her nose? Yes, yes.

Henri.—She had a friend, Armandine Gambler, the mother of this young lady who does us the honor to breakfast with us.

Jac.—(With a grimace.) Enchanted, I'm sure.

Henri.—Are you hungry, Juliette?

Jul.—Well, I should say so. My morning roll seems like a dream. (She touches her hat.) May I take off my lid?

Henri.—What? Help her, Jacques.

Jac.—(Feeling for her hat pin.) Ouch!

Jul.—Did you prick yourself? Suck your finger, nothing better.

Jac.—(Growling.) Confound it!

Jul.—Or rap it on the marble good and hard. (Fluffs up her hair.) Ah, it does the hair good to get an airing.

Henri.—How beautiful it is!

Jul.—It curls naturally.

Jac.—Then it must be short.

Jul.—(Indignantly.) Short? Oh, your eye isn't in it. Short? Just see if it's short. (She takes out the pins. Her hair falls to her knees.)

Henri.—By jove!

Jac.—The seven sisters! (Drawing back as she shakes it.)

Henri.—(Laughing, to Jacques.) Don't you like it?

Jac.—Those tresses are full of ambushes: I fear them.

Henri.—How old do suppose she is?

Jac.—About the *enfant terrible* age.

Henri.—Then I must say as she, "Oh, your eye isn't in it." She's twenty-one.

Jul.—(Gravely.) To-morrow at seven in the evening my twenty-one years will all be coralled.

Jac.—My warmest congratulations. (To Henri.) I'm as hungry as a bear. And you?

Henri.—I'm beginning to be. (He rings.)

Jul.—(Rummaging among the toilet articles.) May I take a little, Monsieur?

Henri.—A little what?

Jul.—Of the paté, the paté d' amandes.

Henri.—Why certainly. There on the right.

Jul.—Oh, I've found it. (Rubs it on her hands.)

Jac.—(Low.) By jove, she's not lacking in gall, that girl.

Henri.—She's very droll. (To Gustave, who enters.) Gustave, lay one more cover.

Gustave.—Very well, sir. (He leaves, looking hard at Juliette, who is perfuming herself.)

Jac.—(Low.) Now she's helping herself to your cologne.

Jul.—(Who has heard.) Soft hands and sweet odors—merely to be worthy of you—to do you honor. Have I done wrong Monsieur?

Henri.—No, no.

Jul.—'Tis such a pleasure to me—to smell sweet. As if I were in paradise, you know. I'm so terribly bored at the convent.

Jac.—(Ironically.) At the convent? You're in a convent?

Jul.—Yes, rue de la Sante—What are you laughing at?

Jac.—Nothing—You've scarcely the air of a school girl.

Jul.—What have I the air of, a nun?

Jac.—Still less. And what is it you do in your convent? Pray to God?

Jul.—Certainly. But I work also, work hard, and its such thankless work. If you but knew! Why I must be there at seven o'clock in the morning. Sister Sainte-Hermangarde, who isn't half grouchy, and who has a wall-eye which is said to see nothing, but really sees everything just the same, is there at the work-room door, watch in hand. "Ah, you're late this morning, Juliette Gambier, a minute late," and then, with that face of hers, which would stop a clock—

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Henri's salon. Henri and Jacques stretched out in easy chairs. Juliette, dressed simply and modestly, is standing near Henri, offering a light for his cigar.

Henri.—(To Juliette.) Thanks. (She blows out the match.)

Juliette.—A little benedictine?

Henri.—Just a drop.

Jul.—(To Jacques.) And you, Monsieur Jacques?

Jacques.—Oh, a few drops—There—A trifle more. Thanks.
(She fills his glass.)

Jac.—(To Henry.) I thought you two were going to the theatre this evening.

Henri.—We were—to the Gymnase. But at the last moment, when I came to dress, that tired feeling came over me, and I decided not to stir out.

Jac.—And your tickets were thrown away?

Jul.—No, Gustave took them to a friend of Henri's: Madam de Brauver.

Jac.—Ah! (To Henri.) And she's all right, "Personified Agitation?"

Henri.—I'm sure I don't know; and I care less. I haven't seen her since that scene of the other day, nor do I ever expect to see her again.

Jac.—Then why did you send her the seats?

Henri.—As a p. p. c.—Besides, I didn't know what else to do with them.

Jacques.—You didn't know what to do with them? Thanks. And I? It's curious you never think of me.

Henri.—(Simply.) By jove, that's so; I might have given them to you.

Jul.—But Monsieur Jacques is not in evening dress. He couldn't have availed himself of them.

Jac.—I beg pardon, I might very well have gone in my sack-coat. (Grumbling.) But there's no danger that—

Jul.—(Laughing.) Come, come; no kicking. What, then, might I not say? Why, do you know, I was all ready and yet I had to disrobe—such a beautiful new gown, too. (To Henri.) Isn't it becoming, my new gown?

Henri.—Yes, indeed, very. But between the pleasure of going to the theatre in a new gown and my comfort, you did not hesitate a second, but sacrificed your pleasure, as was fitting. That's the way you must act to please me.

Jul.—(Gently.) Yes. (A short pause.) May I get my work? It won't annoy you to see me crochet?

Henri.—No, it won't annoy me this evening.

Jul.—Shall I return immediately, or leave you and Monsieur Jacques alone together awhile?

Henri.—Let us chat awhile. (He looks at his watch.) It's now quarter after, return at half past, won't you?

Jul.—(Gently.) Yes, sir. (She leaves. A short silence.)

Jac.—Well, you two astonish me. Six weeks ago, when Juliette breakfasted with us, you told me that you'd keep her a few days and then send her home with some trifling present or other. And now, when I return for the first time, six weeks later, you are living together.

Henri.—(Calmly.) But we're not living together—at least not in your sense of the phrase.

Jac.—(Surprised.) What?

Henri.—(Emphasizing his words.) I am not Juliette's lover.

Jac.—(Incredulous.) Come, come—

Henri.—'Twill be two months on the twentieth since she came here; since then she has slept in the bed-room adjoining mine, and not once, understand me clearly, not once, I say, have I crossed the threshold of her chamber.

Jac.—(Astounded.) Why not?

Henri.—My dear fellow, before my double rupture with *Elise Verveine* and *Madam de Brauver*, I reflected about myself, long and seriously. I recognized that, in spite of my apparent vigor, I was getting tired. Tired of your women of the world and of your ladies of easy virtue as well. I might marry, it is true; but then I should run the risk of falling into the hands of some puss who might marry me to get her freedom or possibly to get my money. A wife is a kept-woman who has all the exigencies of a mistress and who exacts deference besides. Then the question presented itself, what ought I to do, and I concluded that what I needed was a mistress domestic enough to consecrate herself exclusively to my comfort, to my somewhat egotistical bachelor whims and

yet sufficiently voluptuous to satisfy the taste of a somewhat exacting sensualist.

Jac.—Ah, I see; camomile tea and champagne.

Henri.—Exactly so.—Now, the day that Juliette breakfasted with us, Armandine returned about three o'clock in search of her daughter—

Jac.—Still hiring out chairs, Armandine?

Henri.—Yes—obedient, but sad, Juliette was bidding me good-bye, when all of a sudden the idea struck me, that perhaps a few days' training would suffice to make of Juliette, this docile and attentive mistress that I latterly had so much desired. I said to Armandine: "Leave Juliette with me for a week or so, won't you?"

Jac.—And she, of course, answered yes, with many thanks.

Henri.—No; would you believe it? she refused.

Jac.—Ah, the influence of that chapel of the Virgin!

Henri.—You ought to have heard her. "Oh, no, Monsieur Henri, I didn't bring Juliette here for that—a girl that the Abbe Bruyere wished to make a nun of." And she cried like a calf.

Jac.—How the devil would you have her cry?

Henri.—It was actually necessary for Juliette to declare that she herself wished to remain, and to insist upon her right as a girl, legally of age, to stay with me.

Jac.—(Scoffingly.) Ah, the thunder-clap! But what I find so surprising is, that you did not profit immediately by her accommodating disposition.

Henri.—(With a knowing air.) Ah, my dear fellow, I should have been quite lacking in cleverness, had I been so *maladroit*. It would have been simply impossible *afterwards* to follow the line of conduct I had laid down for myself—to mould Juliette to my idiosyncrasies, to my exigencies; in a word, to school her in that particular system of æsthetics I had in mind. No, no; before making her my mistress, it was imperative to fashion her character in order that, once mine, she might easily maintain herself in the route laid down.

Jac.—"Tis assuredly no common-place way of regarding betrothal; for, after all, it is a betrothal—of the left hand.

Henri.—Yes, yes; a left-hand, morganatic betrothal.

Jac.—And—when do you count upon “crowning your flame?”

Henri.—This very evening.

Jac.—Ah, that’s the reason you refused to go to the Gymnase is it?

Henri.—(Sententiously.) No, you’re wrong. I refused to go to the Gymnase for quite a different reason. To say to a woman, “come, my dear, put on your new gown and hat, we’ll go to the premiere, where you’re sure to make no mean impression,” and then to declare at the last moment that it doesn’t suit you to go out and that she must disrobe and pass the evening beneath the lamp sewing, is most excellent discipline. I deprived Juliette of the theatre this evening solely as an exercise in moral training. And you, yourself, saw how she accepted it. No ill-nature, no tears, no fainting; on the contrary, a sweet and gentle gaiety, a charming grace. You can see for yourself, my dear fellow, that what I have done is well done, and that my decision was excellent. I have made no mistake nor deceived myself. Ah, old chap, it is no custom of mine to hang medals on myself; but, really, you must recognize that, as an educator, I am without a peer.

Jac.—(Constrained.) The fact is—But love—You surely are not in love?

Henri.—Oh, yes; she pleases me very much. In fact, there were moments when, if I had not sworn—it wasn’t always easy, you know, by jove. Happily, I had fixed upon a date, the 12th of February, this very evening. That sustained my courage.

Jac.—And Mother Gambier? What part does she play?

Henri.—None. She has not seen her daughter for six weeks, for I wrote her not to come until this evening. You will comprehend that I did not want her here interfering with my training.

Jac.—(Shrugging his shoulders.) What you have been telling me is idiotic, simply idiotic. You’re going to get yourself into a peck of trouble by this absurd idea of training a mistress. Besides, this liaison will inevitably separate you from your friends.

Henri.—Separate me from them? I'd like to see it do that! Juliette not welcome my friends? That would be strange! She don't see anything except through my eyes, I tell you.

Jac.—My dear fellow, when I was a youngster my mother used to say, "Jacques, if you're a good boy this afternoon, you shall have some dessert to-night." I was good during the afternoon; but no sooner was my dessert swallowed than I raised Cain.

Henri.—There's no analogy. Poor little Juliette, who trembles in my presence; who, for a cross look or word, blushes and grows pale by turns and then hangs her head; she's a loving little lamb, who wouldn't dare even to bleat without my permission.

Jac.—Until the day arrives when she can deal you a solar plexus.

Henri.—(Drily.) I beg, no far-fetched psychology. Don't judge this child with the same eye that passes upon the merit of the ordinary bar-room girl, your customary love.

Jac.—One pastures where one can. Not everyone has the opportunity or the means to make a sweetheart to order. (A silence.)

Henri.—By the way, do you need any money?

Jac.—I always need money.

Henri.—How much do you want?

Jac.—Three louis would do, five would be better.

Henri.—Well, here's six.

Jac.—Thanks. (Somewhat scornfully.) Do you want a receipt?

Henri.—(In the same tone.) Yes, as usual. (The clock strikes.) Half past eight. You shall see how exact Juliette is. I'll wager that she'll enter at the last vibration of the gong. (She does so.)

Enter Juliette.

Juliette.—All finished—the secrets? (She seats herself near the lamp and begins to crochet.)

Henri.—And what have you been doing meanwhile?

Jul.—I've been going over the cook's accounts. She'd made a mistake of thirty-two sous in her favor.

Jac.—Thirty-two sous? That doesn't amount to much.

Henri.—(To Jacques.) You're above such trifles, I suppose?

Jul.—And then I insisted upon her making a better choice in beefsteaks. (To Jacques.) Every morning I give him the juice from a big beefsteak in consomme.

Henri.—Yes, I'm anæmic.

Jul.—He needs an invigorator.

Jac.—What, with that appearance? Why, even your ears are swollen with blood. You're the picture of good health.

Henri.—The picture proves nothing. Consumptives, you know, usually have a good color.

Jac.—You're not trying to make me believe you're consumptive, are you?

Henri.—No, but my temperature is below the normal. What is your temperature?

Jac.—I don't know, nor do I care.

Henri.—You're probably 37.3, like most people; while I'm scarcely 37.

Jul.—(Gently.) 36.9 in the arm-pit.

Jac.—(Chaffing.) Poor fellow!

Henri.—(To Juliette.) Juliette, just show Jacques what you're making for me. (She shows it.)

Jac.—What is it? A garter?

Jul.—Oh, no; a cravat. Oh, your eye isn't in it. (Henri whistles. Juliette, eagerly, to Henri.) Oh, I beg pardon; please pardon me.

Henri.—(Good naturedly.) Very well. It wasn't very serious that time—I might, in fact, have spared my whistle. 'Twas merely a little whistled warning to remind you that I cannot tolerate slang in the mouth of a woman.

Jul.—(Sadly.) And I was so glad to think that you had not whistled once this evening.

Jac.—(To Henri.) This whistle, then—?

Henri.—Is merely a little conventional signal between Juliette and me. When she makes a mistake——

Jul.—(Modestly.) When I use slang——

Henri.—I warn her by whistling softly. Then she stops; or modifies her phrase. That's all.

Jac.—(Looking first at one, then at the other.) Well, well, I no longer regret not having gone to the theatre. You're as good as a show, you two. You, with your whistle, and you, Juliette, with your soft, submissive air. So soft and so submissive that I frequently wonder if you are not trying to make fools of us all.

Jul.—(Quickly.) Oh, Monsieur Jacques! It's not nice of you to say that, not nice at all. I trust you're only joking.

Henri.—Certainly he's only joking. You're not going to take his chaff seriously, I hope. And, while we're on this subject, you'll kindly permit me to say a word or two, will you not?

Jac.—(Chaffingly.) What! More?

Henri.—(Gravely.) Yes. (To Juliette.) You take everything too much to heart. The least thing upsets you. For the merest trifle you tremble, grow pale and weep. Now, you must endeavor to overcome that——You must try to master your nerves; you understand what I mean, don't you, my child? It is evident that it is not disagreeable for a man to have near him a vibrating, impressionable little creature, but nevertheless it is quite necessary that this passionate sensibility should not be scattered apropos of anything or everything in order that at a decisive hour, when wanted, it may be found in absolute integrity. Do you catch my meaning?

Jul.—(Repeating, strongly accentuating each syllable.) In absolute integrity. (As if an idea had struck her.) Oh, yes, yes.

Henri.—Well, then, repeat what I said and explain it.

Jac.—What! You're going to make her explain it?

Henri.—Certainly, I want to be assured that she understands me. (To Juliette.) Go on.

Jul.—(With winning grace.) Well, whatever may be said to me, I am not to be moved, except, of course, when you

speak to me; and my sensibilities are to be kept for you alone. Isn't that it?

Henri.—(Triumphantly, to Jacques.) Eh, what do you say to that?

Jac.—(Constrained.) Oh—very nicely done. (He rises.) My compliments.

Henri.—You're going?

Jac.—By jove, I don't wish to be indiscreet. (With a sly smile.) Especially this evening.

Henri.—Oh, wait a few moments; it isn't nine yet. (To Gustave, who enters.) What is it?

Gustave.—Madam Gambier wishes to know if she may say a word or two to Mademoiselle.

Henri.—Why, certainly. Bring her in.

Jul.—(Timidly.) And that won't discommode you?

Henri.—Not at all. Besides, Jacques and I will smoke a cigar on the balcony meanwhile.

Jul.—Be sure and put on your fur overcoat.

Henri.—All right. (He gives her an affectionate tap on the cheek.) Bye, bye, for the present.

Jul.—Bye, bye—Good night, Monsieur Jacques.

Jac.—(Very coldly.) Good night, Mademoiselle. (Both men leave.)

Jul.—(Alone. As soon as the men have left a change comes over her face and attitude and she heaves a long sigh of evident relief. Then slowly stretches herself like one glad to be free from a fatiguing exercise.)

Enter Madam Gambier.

Madam Gambier.—(Effusively.) Bonjour, dearie; why, I haven't seen you for six full weeks.

Jul.—That's so—How are you?

Mad. G.—There are people who are more sick than I am, thank God. And you, daughter?

Jul.—I? Look at me. (Drops into an armchair.)

Mad. G.—You're getting fatter, aren't you?

Jul.—Somewhat—and just where I need it, too; but my waist doesn't budge a bit. Always forty-seven centimetres, not a hair more.

Mad. G.—So much the better. Don't you want to kiss me?

Jul.—Yes. (Kisses her.) Oh, what have you been eating? You smell of garlic.

Mad. G.—I smell of garlic? Why, I haven't even touched it with the end of my finger nails. You imagine it.

Jul.—No, no. I assure you I—

Mad. G.—Unless it's my morning's sausage—however, since then it's had time to emancipate.

Jul.—Evaporate, you mean. No, it hasn't evaporated. Sit down.

Mad. G.—(Sitting down.) My, but it's a pleasure to sit in these chairs—you sink way down, and they're so soft and nice. Quite different from my chapel chairs, which nearly break my hips, God knows. By the way, I've a lot of things to tell you on the Abbe's account.

Jul.—Oh, thanks; then the Abbe knows exactly where I am?

Mad. G.—I told him you were with a gentleman of a certain age, who was very good to you.

Jul.—And he replied in that unctuous manner of his, that it would be preferable in every respect if the dear child was a nun?

Mad. G.—No, because he little suspects that here you—In fact he thinks you're only a house-keeper—I never dared to tell him the whole truth.

Jul.—(Coolly.) Say, mamma, hold on to the cushion of your chair. I'm going to jar you—I'm not Henri's mistress.

Mad. G.—(Incredulously.) What?

Jul.—Such as I was six weeks ago when I arrived here, so I am still to-day.

Mad. G.—And he keeps you just the same? Truly, he is a fine gentleman. You won't find many of his stripe, I tell you. I never met one. Men in this respect are more rapacious than sharks in the sea.

Jul.—There, there, don't throw any spasms. I have reason to believe, in fact, I am sure that to-night——

Mad. G.—Ah!

Jul.—(In a hard tone.) Owing to certain allusions, certain little pleasantries, I have caught on to the fact that he intends to do me the honor of becoming my lover this very evening.

Mad. G.—(Shocked.) My, you say that in such a vicious way.

Jul.—I say it as I should.

Mad. G.—Come, now, Juliette; he's too good to you, to use that tone when you speak of him. If that's the way you show your gratitude for his delicacy——

Jul.—His delicacy!

Mad. G.—Dear me, just think a moment. What or who forced him to wait? He might, the very first day, have put his slippers under your bed. In place of that he patiently waits, doubtless saying to himself, "I want her to come to me of her own volition, willingly." Ah, my daughter, such a proof of esteem is rarer than a ball in a sacristy.

Jul.—(Who has listened to her mother with indulgent disdain.) You think so?

Mad. G.—Parbleu! This man is sure to make you happy. You've started off well and the route is charming. You're going to live like a jewel in cotton, with no fear of draughts; well dressed, well fed, with gilt buttons to wait on you. Ah! if I had had at your age one-quarter of your luck I should have chanted the *Magnificat*. To live in such a home was my dream; but no sooner did I believe myself at last calmly settled with a serious person like, for example, my brown gentleman from the Antilles——

Jul.—Your nigger!

Mad. G.—No, no; not a nigger, just dark, very dark—— Well, as I was saying, bang! something happened that took away my chance just like someone taking away the chair from behind me when I was going to sit down.

Jul.—Well, you've found yourself often enough on the floor.

Mad. G.—I always found myself on the floor. That's the

reason I'm so pleased to know you have such a good chance. Ah, you can walk with your head high in the air, while everyone will bow to you and think, "She's with a rich man who refuses her nothing." Ah! if I were in your place I couldn't help shouting for joy. (Gravely.) And then, as it is necessary to think of one's salvation, I should thank God, too— But you sit there like a chump—

Jul.—(Coolly.) Now, listen to me a moment. It's about time I had a chance to say a word or two. Do you know what I was thinking of while you were talking?

Mad. G.—No.

Jul.—I thought, is it possible that a mouth that has been in use for fifty-four years can utter such absurdities.

Mad. G.—(Vexed.) Oh my, my, what—

Jul.—At your age and after all you have endured. Had you lived on a bed of roses with your eyes bandaged and cotton stuffed in your ears you could scarcely talk otherwise. Why, it's an open question with me if in place of brains you haven't sawdust in your noddle.

Mad. G.—Try to be polite, at least.

Jul.—That such an intimacy had been your dream at sixteen, I can understand and excuse. One has a right to be a simpleton at that age. But that to-day you can't wish anything better to insure the happiness of your child—well, hand over the encyclopedia—I don't understand it.

Mad. G.—Pardon me, but—

Jul.—Now, just think, mamma. It's not very enticing to live with a man under such conditions. Think, one is less than a servant.

Mad. G.—Oh, pshaw!

Jul.—Certainly, one is less than a servant. What is a cook and a chambermaid? Women who attend to the cooking and look after the rooms, are they not? What they do is clear, avowable. But the mistress, what does she do? Tell me, won't you? I defy you to tell me.

Mad. G.—(Troubled.) Well, she's there on account of the sentiments—

Jul.—Bah! She's there for Monsieur's pleasure, solely for his pleasure, and the proof is that no sooner does he fall sick or meet with a great sorrow than he says to his mistress, "Clear out. I am expecting some members of my family to take care of or console me."

Mad. G.—They don't all talk that way.

Jul.—Nearly all. Nor do they even need to be sick or hunt up an excuse to give you the G. B. "It's all over. Good-bye. Skip out." And you must leave, while the servants, useful they, indispensable they, are tickled to death to see the mistress who commanded yesterday now thrown aside like an old bouquet. And you think I would accept that rôle? And you think I would live with Henri as you lived with your nigger? (Vigorous protests from Madam Gambier.) Continually in fear that I should lose my position? Not much. I'm not built that way. Do you think I'm going to tremble all my life and have nothing at last but a hard-luck story, like you? No, no; I'm not going to spin that kind of a yarn.

Mad. G.—Of course, there are trying moments—but one has to put up with them.

Jul.—But why must we put up with them? Since there is a desirable as well as a wretched fate, why should one say, "I am created for the wretched fate?" Say, that recalls the day we went to the opera, to the free performance, you know. Had I listened to you, we should have been in one of the last rows, up among the gods, where we should have seen nothing at all, in place of in a good box, where we sat in the first row.

Mad. G.—Yes, in one of the very best boxes.

Jul.—Yes, where there is a best, I make choice of the best. That's my style. I am fond of the first choice in everything.

Mad. G.—But you do wrong to disdain what others would be quite content with.—Now Monsieur Henri, for example—

Jul.—(Drily.) Don't let's talk of him any longer. I have my ideas regarding him and you have yours; they differ greatly; what's the use of disputing about it.

Mad. G.—No use of disputing. Tell me your ideas; let's see what they are.

Jul.—No, no.

Mad. G.—What a child! It looks as if you had no confidence in your mother. Come, come; let's hear what they are.

Jul.—It's not worth while. You wouldn't understand them. You shall know some day.

Enter Jacques.

Jacques.—I beg pardon, but you haven't seen a bit of paper, have you? (To Madam G.) Good evening, Madam.

Mad. G.—Good evening. A bit of paper? Have you lost it?

Jac.—Yes, a piece of red paper—I value it highly. (Looks about.)

Mad. G.—(With alacrity.) Wait, I'll hunt for it.

Jul.—(Drily.) Never mind, mamma; never mind. (She pushes her mother gently toward the door.)

Mad. G.—(To Jacques.) Good-night, Monsieur; I trust that you'll—(To Juliette.) You'll be reasonable, won't you, dear?

Jul.—Yes, yes; rest easy, mamma. (Madam G. leaves.) You're not able to find it?

Jac.—No—I can't understand what—

Jul.—(Without searching.) And you're sure you lost it here?

Jac.—Sure? By jove, it seems to me that—(He feels in his pockets.) Ah, here it is—a pawn shop ticket. (He folds it carefully and puts it in his pocketbook.)

Jul.—Where is Henri?

Jac.—In his room. He asked me to let him know when your mother left. (Starts toward the door.)

Jul.—Wait.

Jac.—(Astonished, stopping.) What did you say?

Jul.—I said wait. I want to talk with you a few moments.

Jac.—(Sitting down.) At your orders.

Jul.—(Slowly.) Monsieur Jacques, what have I done to you?

Jac.—Why, nothing at all; why do you ask?

Jul.—To know—Before Henri just now, why did you say that by my soft and submissive air I was trying to make fools of you all?

Jac.—(Drily.) Because that's my opinion; at least as regards Henri.

Jul.—Thanks. (A short silence.) Well, you're mistaken,

Jac.—(Ironically.) So much the better.

Jul.—You're absolutely mistaken. This gentleness, this submission, which to you may seem exaggerated, is merely a proof of my love. I love Henri and nothing is too much trouble to please him. This is the truth. Don't you believe it?

Jac.—Oh, yes, yes; I always believe what the ladies say. Why should you lie? How would it benefit you to lie?

Jul.—With you I should surely reap no benefit, so I shall be quite frank. (A pause.) You doubtless know that I am not Henri's mistress.

Jac.—Yes, I know that you are not yet his mistress.

Jul.—(Slowly.) My precise intention is not to be his mistress to-night, to-morrow nor ever. Do you understand me? Never.

Jac.—(Without surprise.) Good. I see what you're driving at. The superb apartments, the magnificent equipage, the pearl necklace. Well, try it; why not?

Jul.—(Disdainfully.) A demi-mondaine, I? No, no; something better than that, can't you guess?

Jac.—Oh, is it, perchance—

Jul.—(Simply.) Yes, I want to become Madam Courtial.

Jac.—(After a moment's surprise, coldly.) By jove, you're not slow. Only, you know, it takes two to make a marriage, and Henri will never consent.

Jul.—How do you know?

Jac.—He isn't as easy as you think. He'll never consent. And even if it should so happen that he was fool enough, idiot enough—Well, he has friends who—

Jul.—What friends?

Jac.—Well, I, for example, would prevent him from hanging the mill-stone about his neck.

Jul.—You believe, then, that I should make him unhappy? Reassure yourself. I should not make him unhappy. In the first place, I should not deceive him.

Jac.—(Ironically.) Yes, yes—

Jul.—What? Yes, yes.

Jac.—Go ahead.

Jul.—Well, it's not, I suppose, because I committed a fault? Many young ladies belonging to the best society have committed faults, yet that has not prevented them from—

Jac.—"A young lady with a blot, and a million dot
Needs no matrimonial agent."

Jul.—Oh, you make me tired. Listen to me seriously, won't you?

Jac.—No, I won't. I won't listen to you a second longer. If I have any influence over Henri, and I have, you shall not marry him, understand?

Jul.—(Slowly.) I shall not marry him?

Jac.—(Hotly.) No, no! A hundred times no!

Jul.—Why get excited? Just see how calm I am. Then you'll prevent him from marrying me?

Jac.—I shall prevent him.

Jul.—Of course, through interest for him?

Jac.—(Sincerely.) Without a doubt. I owe him too much, he has been too good to me for many a year for me to hesitate a second to save him from this peril.

Jul.—(Chaffingly.) Gratitude is so charming! (A short silence.) Now, Monsieur Jacques, are you quite sure that at this moment you are thinking only of Henri's interest?

Jac.—(Astonished.) What?

Jul.—Are you quite sure that you are not thinking just a little bit also of yourself? That you are not saying within you, "Ah, here's a clever little woman, who, if she becomes Madam Courtial will modify the habits of the household?" (Jacques tries to protest, but she continues.) And they are

rather agreeable for you, aren't they, these household habits? Your cover laid every day——

Jac.—(Indignantly.) Oh, come now——

Jul.—(Continuing.) Even when we dine out. Then the louis of Henri glide so easily from his pocket into yours. I can readily understand that you want to flag anything which looks as if it might make you lose these advantages, but please don't ask me to believe that hot air. Doing it only for Henri's sake; bah!

Jac.—(Jeeringly.) "Flag," "hot air." Why, that's slang, eh? That necessitates the whistle. But, nevertheless, I'll not even hiss. I'm too much amused.

Jul.—Oh, don't jeer. You've really no desire to laugh and you're not a bit amused. On the contrary you're decidedly anxious. If you could but see your face! Come, come; recover yourself. The harm I wish you might be borne upon the back of a fly, as mamma says. When I shall become mistress here, nothing shall be changed for you. You shall always have your place at the table and I'll let you quietly touch Henri as usual.

Jac.—I thank you very much, but there's only one thing that counts with me in this affair: my affection for Henri. Henri is the sole being who came to my aid in the darkest hours of my life. And I'm grateful. That astonishes you, doesn't it? 'Tis true, nevertheless. I love him like a brother. I'm as devoted to him as a poodle. (He shouts.) As a poodle. That's it.

Jul.—Oh, don't shout so; it's not worth while. Henri hasn't his ear glued to the key hole. (A silence.) Monsieur Jacques, you were, I believe, at college together, you and Henri?

Jac.—Yes, we were in the same class.

Jul.—And I feel sure you helped him with his tasks.

Jac.—What do you know about it?

Jul.—You must have been an excellent scholar.

Jac.—(Quite pleasantly.) I always stood at the head of my class.

Jul.—There, you see—And Henri, in spite of his intelligence, for Henri is very intelligent, could not have been as good a scholar as you.

Jac.—He was a dunce, simply a dunce, our kind-hearted Henri. (Changing tone and sighing.) Ah, but those days are far away!

Jul.—Truly, fate is not just. All for some, nothing for others.

Jac.—Oh, Henri merits his happiness, for he's a good fellow.

Jul.—Excellent. (A short silence.) But tell me, Monsieur Jacques, have you been so very unfortunate?

Jac.—I was simply starving when Henri found me.

Jul.—That's just what he told me.

Jac.—(Rather surprised.) Ah, he told you that?

Jul.—Yes, it's so natural to speak of the good one does.

Jac.—Very natural!

Jul.—And, then, between Henri and me, of course it doesn't matter.

Jac.—Doesn't matter!

Jul.—Why, let me see; it was only yesterday he said to me, "Ah, if you had seen what condition poor Jacques was in ten years ago when I picked him up, you'd be surprised. He hadn't eaten for three days."

Jac.—Oh, no; for twenty-four hours. That's quite long enough.

Jul.—Well, you know to one as rich as Henri, there's absolutely no difference in another's being without food for three days or merely for twenty-four hours. That interested me in you at once; especially when Henri began to mimic you.

Jac.—(Shocked.) To mimic me?

Jul.—Not you, so much as your wretched condition that evening. He turned up his collar about his neck like one who has no linen on; he shivered and shook like one thinly clad. In fact, he filled me so full of pity for you that I could not prevent myself from saying, "No, no; do not, I beg, imitate this poor Monsieur Jacques any longer. I shall dream of it."

Jac.—Oh, many thanks. (Sneeringly.) But I didn't know that Henri possessed any talent as a mimic.

Jul.—Oh, as I've already said, he wasn't exactly mimicing you, rather your condition. He had no desire to ridicule you—I'm so sorry I told you. You've misconstrued my meaning.

Jac.—Not at all, not at all.

Jul.—Yes you have. It's very annoying. (Changing her tone.) Oh, by the way; what is the "Night Hospitality?"

Jac.—Why, don't you know? It's a sort of lodging-house where vagabonds and beggars find shelter for the night. But what makes you ask?

Jul.—Oh, nothing.

Jac.—Yes, but you must have had some reason. What is it?

Jul.—Well, Henri said—but no, no, I don't wish to repeat it—besides he didn't mean anything by it—

Jac.—But, damn it, what did he say?

Jul.—Well, to-day when the cook refused to dress the spinach in a certain manner, alleging that you did not like it that way, Henri said to her, "Now don't you concern yourself with Jacques, were it not for me, he'd be sleeping in the 'Night Hospitality.'"

Jac.—He said that?

Jul.—Oh, he didn't mean anything bad by it.

Jac.—To the cook?

Jul.—I assure you that it would be very wrong in you to bear him any ill-will because of it. 'Twas nothing but the thoughtlessness of a rich man.

Jac.—(Protesting.) Pardon me—

Jul.—Oh, I know what you're going to say, one may be rich and considerate. Really, my poor Jacques, those who pay, always wish some return for their money, always feel themselves superior.

Jac.—How true that is.

Jul.—It doesn't matter that he loves you, that he is an excellent fellow—to have such consideration, one must be a

woman and have been poor as I. For really to the rich the poor are always inferior.

Jac.—(Between his teeth.) Oh, the rich; a paltry lot! (A pause.)

Jul.—(Approaching Jacques.) Monsieur Jacques, we're friends, are we not?

Jac.—(After a moment's hesitation.) Per-haps. (Juliette offers him her hand, he slowly takes and presses it.)

Enter Henri.

Henri.—(To Jacques.) Well, now, this is the way, is it, that you let me know——? (Jacques mutters something. To Juliette.) Has your mother gone?

Jul.—Yes.

Henri.—(To Jacques.) In that case, old fellow, I won't keep you any longer; I merely wished to thank you. (Offers him his hand.) Good night.

Jac.—(Coldly.) Good night. (Starts toward the door.)

Henri.—Oh, just wait a moment. It seems to me that I've an errand for you to-morrow morning—What the mischief is it? I remember that at dinner, while they were serving the spinach (Jacques makes a grimace) I thought to myself, now I must get Jacques to do this errand to-morrow morning——

Jac.—Let Gustave run your errand.

Henri.—Ah, I have it. Gustave? No, no; it's too far. Now you go to-morrow morning, before ten o'clock, to the rue Delappe, near the Bastille, No. 11 or 12, I think it is, a ham merchant on the left, where you will see an old embossed chafing-dish in copper, a magnificent thing. Coolly offer a hundred sous for it—it's well worth five louis. The woman who has charge at that hour will certainly accept it. You understand, don't you?

Jac.—Yes, but really to-morrow I shall be busy—

Henri.—At what? You've nothing to do. Come, it's understood, you take the omnibus and I'll reimburse you. Au revoir, old chap, au revoir. (He gently pushes him toward and out of the door.)

Henri.—Now suppose we talk of ourselves. (He sits down.) Sit down, won't you?

Jul.—Yes, sir.

Henri.—Nearer, come nearer. (He draws her towards him.)

Jul.—I'm very comfortable here. (Resisting.)

Henri.—No, you're too far away for what I want to tell you.

Jul.—(Coming very near him.) Well, then, here I am.

Henri.—(Taking her hand.) Juliette.

Jul.—Monsieur Henri.

Henri.—Don't call me Monsieur Henri any longer. I permit, I even request you to call me Henri, just Henri, won't you?

Jul.—Oh, I don't dare to.

Henri.—Oh, yes; do.

Jul.—(Timidly.) Henri.

Henri.—That's it. You said it very prettily; now repeat it again, Henri.

Jul.—(In a bashful manner.) Henri.

Henri.—Good! Now here we are, Henri and Juliette; Juliette and Henri: Just like two lovers seated side by side and calling each other by our first names; isn't that a pleasure to you?

Jul.—(Reserved.) Oh, yes, sir.

Henri.—Well as for me, I'm quite content, quite. Do you know I think that I merit considerable credit for having put off for six weeks this charming moment. Do you know why I put it off?

Jul.—No, sir.

Henri.—Because I had undertaken a task, a very delicate task which I felt I must bring to completion before I could speak to you entirely open and above board. This task consisted in making you what you are to-day. I wished to fashion in you those qualities which I hold indispensable to the charming creature that is to be the comrade of my life. Qualities that, thanks to my effort, to my patience, and I must recognize as well, to your willingness and submission, you

have at last acquired. You are at this moment precisely the girl that suits me and that I have longed for. Therefore I can now say to you, certain of the mutual happiness we shall enjoy, Juliette, let us love each other. (He draws her to him.)

Jul.—Oh, Monsieur Henri!

Henri.—(Elated.) Henri, say Henri; just Henri.

Jul.—Oh, Henri, what are you doing?

Henri.—I'm hugging you, that's what I'm doing. And you're a very good person to hug, too, very good. (He draws her to him again, rather roughly.)

Jul.—Oh, let me alone—don't squeeze me like that. You're—you're smothering me. Oh!

Henri.—(Drawing her along.) Come, come.

Jul.—Where?

Henri.—Come.

Jul.—No, no; oh, no—Henri, what do want—Is it possible that you want to—

Henri.—Yes, I want to—yes, I want you—yonder—Juliette, I want you.

Jul.—I, to be your mistress, Henri?

Henri.—Yes, my mistress; my cherished mistress.

Jul.—(Reproachfully.) Oh!

Henri.—You shall see how happy I shall make you. Oh, how happy you shall be!

Jul.—Your mistress, I!

Henri.—Cherished. I said my cherished mistress.

Jul.—Oh, but it's impossible.

Henri.—Why impossible, since I love you?

Jul.—Oh, but I cannot; I don't want to. No, ne; I don't want to.

Henri.—You don't want to? You don't want to be mine? To be Henri's, your Henri's?

Jul.—(Very much agitated.) No, no; oh, Monsieur Henri!

Henri.—(Impetuously.) Henri.

Jul.—Yes, Henri. How could you think that I would ac-

cept—Oh, it's frightful, frightful! (She conceals her face in her hands.)

Henri.—(Nonplussed.) What's the matter with you? What makes you act that way?

Jul.—(Her face still buried in her hands.) Oh, such an idea! You—to have such an idea!

Henri.—Such an idea? Why, there's nothing strange about my idea, I'm sure. By jove, one might think—Really, you didn't expect, did you, that we were going to live eternally side by side like brother and sister? (Juliette shakes her head.) Oh, you didn't, eh? Then what did you expect? Tell me. (Juliette turns her head.) To make such a scene as this it is evident that you've counted upon something. Upon what? (He reflects.) Upon what? Really, I cannot see—(He reflects.) Oh, is it that—No, no; that would be too foolish—Is it possible that you've taken it into your head to make me marry you? (Juliette lowers her eyes.) To make me marry you? (He raises his voice.) Me? Don't turn your eyes away like that, look at me; look me straight in the face. Tell me, is that it? You want me to marry you? (He laughs.) You want me to marry you? Me?

Jul.—(Gently.) Why not?

Henri.—(Imitating her.) Why not? Say, my dear, there's no necessity of your playing that coy, pure virgin business with me, I don't need any excitements. I'm not in that condition, thank God. So, come on.

Jul.—(Calmly.) No.

Henri.—No? You refuse to be mine?

Jul.—No, I don't refuse to be yours: I refuse to be your mistress.

Henri.—So you're serious, are you? You've really taken it into your head to be called Madam Courtial and to make Henri Courtial the son-in-law of Madam Gambier? (He laughs.) Mother Gambier! Listen, Juliette. I've no desire to say anything that might be painful to you, but really, Mother Gambier has been a little too gay and festive to suit me. Think, I became acquainted with her in a bar-room near the Odeon, twenty-two years ago, and if she'd had a little more

fat on her bones, I should perhaps have been your father. As to you——

Jul.—(Apprehensively.) Oh!

Henri.—That you for a moment should imagine that I would marry you passes my comprehension. I thought you more modest, more reasonable. After your adventure with Saumon——

Jul.—(Bursting into tears.) Oh, my God! my God!

Henri.—Well, you're crying now, are you? What are you crying about? Because I spoke (Scornfully) of that tenor? However, it is quite necessary that after such an adventure I should make you clearly understand that you cannot aspire to the name of Madam Courtial. But calm yourself. Be frank, and admit that it was your mother that put this idea of marriage into your head.

Jul.—(Slowly recovering.) No, no; quite the contrary. Mamma went away disconsolate because I declared that I was not willing to become your mistress.

Henri.—But, for Heaven's sake, why aren't you willing to become my mistress? You'll make me lose my temper yet. Had I so desired, you would have been my mistress long ago. The very day of your arrival, in fact. And you wouldn't have made any fuss about it either. Come, now; isn't that so?

Jul.—(Calmly.) Yes, that's so.

Henri.—Well, I'm very glad that you admit it.

Jul.—Not only I shouldn't have made any fuss, as you say, but six weeks ago I should have been quite content, indeed, to have been yours.

Henri.—Then why not now?

Jul.—Well, what was I six weeks ago? Nothing, less than nothing. An unfortunate little creature who had no conception of the difference between right and wrong. No one had taught me. Mamma herself didn't even know there was a difference. But now I've been taught and you, Monsieur Henri, have taught me. That very first evening, by not making me your mistress immediately, you put the idea into my head that I was something else than a poor unfortunate girl. And this idea once in my head, all my other ideas must inevitably change little by little. If I am no longer the same to-day it is

because you, and you only, have transformed me. You have given me a taste for a calm, regular, honorable life—yes, an honorable life; and the longer you waited before claiming me, the more convinced I became that you would not make of me your mistress, but your wife. In giving me those qualities that are desired in a wife you have likewise given me the ambition to become a wife. And I may truly add that seeing you so happy with me, so happy through my efforts, this ambition seems to me the most natural thing in the world.

Henri.—Bah!

Jul.—So don't defer the moment when you may be cared for and petted by a little Juliette who loves you well and will love you still more dearly, as you shall see.

Henri.—You love me? Is that indeed true?

Jul.—Look at me. Look straight into my eyes. Are these eyes of falsehood or deceit? Look into them, look into their depths. (She gazes long and amorously into Henri's eyes.)

Henri.—(Troubled.) Oh, you little jade. Let me kiss that rose-leaf mouth.

Jul.—No, no.

Henri.—Yes, yes.

Jul.—No, only my cheek; I'll let you kiss my cheek. (He tries to kiss her mouth, but she cleverly avoids it.)

Henri.—Oh, but you're a sly rogue! If you hope by these clever manoeuvres to draw me on, you're very much mistaken. Now, listen; I would rather never possess you at all than marry you. So you've over-reached yourself after all, eh?

Jul.—It is your right, as it is mine, to refuse.

Henri.—Say, do you know, you deserve to be sent home to your mother. What would you say, were I to send you home?

Jul.—I would say that I was very sorry indeed to be with you no longer.

Henri.—Yet you would prefer to go home rather than to yield?

Jul.—(Very gently.) Yes, Monsieur Henri.

Henri.—(Furiously.) Well, you're a goose. Understand, a silly little goose.

Jul.—(Very gently.) Yes, Monsieur Henri.

Henri.—You ask for an impossibility, for the moon. Content yourself with what I offer or, deuce take me, if I don't give you your walking-papers. You, my wife? (He laughs.) Why, it's perfectly ridiculous. (A pause. Juliette has been preparing something in a glass.) Well, what are you doing?

Jul.—(Very gently.) Preparing your orangeade as usual every evening.

Henri.—(After a second's hesitation, takes the glass she offers, tastes and then drains it.) Delicious!

Jul.—Isn't it? (Changing her tone and advancing rapidly to Henri.) Oh, there's a drop on your vest, wait a moment. (She rubs the vest carefully with the corner of her handkerchief, then walks slowly towards the door of her room.)

Henri.—Where are you going?

Jul.—To my room. You're somewhat angry now, but to-morrow you'll be calmer. You'll see things differently then. It sometimes happens that an idea which seems extraordinary at first, when one comes to think it over calmly, seems quite natural. Good night. (She leaves.)

Henri.—Good night. (Alone.) Never! Never!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

A year later. The same salon, now dirty and neglected. As the curtain rises Juliette and Henri are seen through a large plate-glass door, finishing dinner in the adjoining room. Then they rise from the table and as they pass into the salon Henri puts his arm around Juliette's waist and presses a kiss upon her bare shoulder. She languidly repulses him with an air of annoyance. For some seconds neither speaks. Henri takes a cigar from his pocket, puts it in his mouth and begins rummaging over several tables. Juliette, rather too richly dressed, seats herself at a table on the right.

Henri.—(Searching.) Well, well; if the place hasn't been

changed again! (To Juliette.) Do you know where the matches are?

Juliette.—(Without turning round or looking.) No.

Henri.—(Rings. Maria comes in.) Where are the matches? (Maria picks up a box of matches directly under Juliette's eyes and hands it to Henri.) And the coffee? Why don't you bring in the coffee?

Maria.—It isn't ready.

Henri.—(Grumbling.) It isn't ready? Always the same trouble. Well, try to serve it hot, at least. Yesterday it was cold as ice. (Maria leaves, exchanging a smile with Juliette.) Why did she laugh, that idiot, when I spoke?

Jul.—Because this morning you burned yourself drinking your coffee, and now you say it was cold as ice.

Henri.—Yesterday it was cold as ice. And even were it not so, would that justify her insolent manner? And to think that you discharged Gustave to engage that woman!

Jul.—She sews like a fairy.

Henri.—Possibly, but she doesn't understand service. Besides, you already had a maid and this gives you two, while I no longer have a male servant but am forced to look after my own traps. It was just the same with the cook, too. You were bound to discharge my good Ugenie—

Jul.—She talked back.

Henri.—And the one you engaged in her place cooks most horribly and spends three times as much besides. By the way, didn't you notice that the table-cloth was torn, like (Pointing.) this curtain? (Pointing to a vase.) And that bouquet is all withered. Then, too, I do wish you'd tell Maria to serve at the left; she persists in serving at the right.

Jul.—It's really of no importance.

Henri.—Pardon me, but it is.

Jul.—Oh, I've had enough of that subject. You're not going to harp on it forever, I hope?

(Maria enters with the coffee, places it on the table and then goes out. Henri attempts to help himself, but the handle is hot and he burns his hand. By using his handkerchief he manages awkwardly to fill his cup.)

Henri.—And the brandy?

Jul.—Is all gone, I forgot to mention it. Jacques finished the last of it yesterday.

Henri.—(Displeased.) Deuce take it, you might at least have kept my very finest old brandy from being all polished off by Jacques. Brandy that cost three louis a bottle. (Juliette takes a pack of cards and begins to shuffle them.) Isn't there any more benedictine, either?

Jul.—(Carelessly.) No, mamma finished that.

Henri.—A pretty state of affairs! (A silence. Then changing his tone.) Say, Juliette, do you know that, after all, I'm quite pleased this evening.

Jul.—Well, so much the better.

Henri.—I'm quite pleased because we're not going out and are not to be bothered with company, so that at last we can spend an evening together, all alone. And that happens so rarely. Would you like to know how many times that has happened since we've been married? (He takes a little book out of his pocket.) Seventeen times in a whole year. Of course, I don't include our wedding trip.

Jul.—What an idea, to keep an account of such trifles!

Henri.—(With a significant air.) Oh, I keep an account of everything. (He approaches her.) See, everything.

Jul.—Oh, it's scarcely worth the trouble; I'll take your word for it. (Pushing him aside.) Now, don't make me miss my play. Jack—queen—If I don't get another jack I'm up against it. (Henry makes a wry face.) Ah, here you are, my pretty jack. I wanted to finish this solitaire before Rosalie Cerneau and Anna Rompel arrived.

Henri.—(Astonished.) What? What's that you said?

Jul.—(Calmly.) I said that Anna Rompel and Rosalie Cerneau were coming this evening.

Henri.—What for? What are they coming here this evening for? Well, by jove, those hussies have got a hard cheek to come here.

Jul.—Oh, I promised to loan them a trifle or two for a comedy they're to play this evening at the Cercle Militaire.

Henri.—A trifle or two? And what, pray, are these trifles?

Jul.—Oh, you make me tired. This doesn't concern men. A necklace and a cloak, there. I can't comprehend this mania for asking questions.

Henri.—Then you're going to receive these strumpets?

Jul.—In the first place, they're not strumpets, they're actresses; old comrades of mine at the Conservatoire. Yes, I shall certainly receive them. And you will do me the kindness, I trust, to be polite to them and not twist your face all out of shape.

Henri.—'Tis for them you put on that gown?

Jul.—Well, I do hope you're not now going to reproach me for having a pretty gown. Yes, I put it on for them and for my own sake—for my own sake especially, as I myself enjoy being well dressed.

Henri.—And not for your husband, also?

Jul.—Oh, you're not happy, except when I have no gown at all.

Henri.—Yes, that's so—I'm not happy except—that's very true. You're so pretty! Oh, your shoulders, your arms. (He desires to kiss her, but she repulses him.)

Jul.—Behave yourself, won't you?

Henri.—(Quite excited.) Oh, on your neck, just on your neck.

Jul.—Well, then, hurry up, and above all, be sure you don't disarrange my curls. (He kisses her.) There, there, that's enough; quite enough. (She struggles.) Now don't put your hands on me like that—One might think you had three or four hands. You seem to have them all around me. Come, come; hands off, I tell you. You're awfully tiresome!

Henri.—(Losing his head.) Oh, but I love you, my lily, my Juliette. I'm head over heels in love with you. Do you want to make me divinely happy? Well, then, don't receive those hussies this evening; let them be told you're not at home. Do that for me, for your Henri, won't you, my love?

Jul.—But since they're coming to get my necklace and cloak I must receive them.

Henri.—Maria can give them the necklace and the cloak in the ante-room. I beg you, dear little wife, don't refuse me this pleasure, pray don't. You will grant me this favor, won't you?

Jul.—Oh, no. Aren't you something of a simpleton to work yourself up in this way over a ten-minute visit? Come, come; don't speak of it any longer, and I'll reward you with this. (She puts the palm of her hand against his mouth. He kisses it eagerly, then tries to enfold her in his arms, but she defends herself and the cards fall to the floor.) Oh, you've mussed me all up. Just look at my laces. What a brute you are! And the cards; all on the floor. Come, quick, pick them up. (Henri gets down on the floor to pick up the cards. At this moment the maid opens the door, Anna and Rosalie enter.)

Jul.—(Moving towards them.) Bonjour, how goes it?

Anna.—Oh, we're frozen stiff. And you? (They kiss one another.)

Jul.—Warm yourselves. (The women seat themselves before the fire while Henri is rising.)

Anna.—Good evening, Monsieur. (Henry merely bows.)

Rosalie.—Good evening, Monsieur. (Again Henri merely bows.)

Jul.—I hope you're both in good shape.

Ros.—Oh, don't mention it. I'm furious. Just look at my back. (She turns round.)

Jul.—Well, what's the matter with your back? Your back's all right.

Ros.—And you don't see that fold in the middle? That puffed-out fold? Why, I look like a hunch-back.

Jul.—Oh, no; no. (To Anna.) My, my; what a pretty gown.

Anna.—Suits me from the ground up, doesn't it?

Jul.—Oh, it's a poem. Walk round a little—Is it from Ernestine's?

Anna.—No, from Zelina. Ernestine is dead, she killed herself; didn't you know it?

Jul.—That's curious. Why, I met her only a week ago—So she's killed herself, eh? Why?

Anna.—On account of a man that had ruined her. She killed herself in rather a droll fashion, too—One evening she stretched out on her bed, with flowers heaped up all about her, just like in a romance. I don't know what it was she swallowed; morphine, or something else. At any rate, something that wouldn't make her vomit—Something that kept her nice and clean. And then, on the table near the bed were four bottles of champagne, extra-dry, and a note, in which she had written "This champagne is for those who will have the ennui of burying me. I have lived sufficiently to know that all men are selfish and thirsty."

Ros.—(Dreamily.) She wasn't so far off either.

Jul.—Oh, that depends upon the woman, you know. She was homely, this Ernestine, and a back number—Won't you take something?—a cup of tea?

Anna.—No, thanks.

Jul.—Won't you, Rosalie?

Ros.—Oh, no; thanks. When I play, my throat is so contracted that not even a drop of water will go down.

Jul.—Is it clever, the piece you are to play at the Cercle Militaire?

Anna.—Oh, rather. A dialogue between a mother and her daughter who have the same lover and who scrap over him—Oh, it's quite droll.

Jul.—And who plays the mother?

Anna.—I; would you believe it? But a mother who isn't yet thirty—An Algerian mother, who married at twelve. Oh, it doesn't age me. Only, the bothersome thing is that the rôle calls for jewels.

Jul.—(Smiling.) I'm going to loan you my necklace. (To Maria, who enters.) My necklace and blue opera-cloak. (Maria leaves.) Anything new at the Conservatoire? Any gossip?

Ros.—No, not a thing; only the same old chestnuts. Oh, by the way, of course you remember Saumon—Saumon, the tenor. (Henri, who until now had been reading his paper, lowers it so that his face is seen.)

Anna.—(Coughing, to warn Rosalie.) Yes, yes; of course we remember. (Trying to change the topic.) Then it's your pearl necklace you're going to loan me.

Jul.—Yes, my dog collar.

Ros.—(Persisting.) Well, now, just imagine, Saumon has lost his voice. And you'd never guess in a thousand times what he's doing to-day. He's a pipe-layer.

Henri.—A what?

Ros.—A pipe-layer. He lays pipes. Oh, he's earning his living; but all the same he regrets the Conservatoire, the theatre and all the rest. Otherwise he hasn't changed a bit. He still has the same greenish eyes, the same white teeth. Ah, he's caught on many a time with them, that fellow. (A constrained silence. Rosalie at length perceives she has been indiscreet.) Of course I don't really know anything about him personally; I only repeat what everybody says—

Maria enters, carrying a cloak and a jewel box.

Jul.—(To Rosalie.) Oh, here's the cloak. (She throws it around Rosalie. Then, in a low voice.) Say, perhaps you don't realize that you're something of a chump. (Rosalie tries to protest.) Oh, it's all right, but never mention it again.

Anna.—(Looking at the necklace.) How magnificent! That must be worth ten thousand at least.

Henri.—With eight more added.

Anna.—Eighteen thousand! Oh! (She embraces Juliette.) How happy you are.

Ros.—And your husband gave it to you?

Jul.—Naturally. Who do you think would give it to me?

Ros.—Why, how could I tell? (Juliette fastens the necklace on Anna.)

Anna.—Thanks. How beautiful it makes me! Many thanks, dearie; I'll bring it back to-morrow morning.

Jul.—Well, do so, and breakfast with us.

Anna.—Oh, really; you're too kind. I fear I should inconvenience you.

Jul.—Inconvenience us? Old married people like we are? You're joking. Come, it's understood, you'll breakfast with us to-morrow morning. Won't you come, too, Rosalie?

Ros.—I should be delighted to do so, but I cannot miss my class. However, I'll send your cloak home before noon.

Jul.—There's no hurry. (The actresses leave.)

Henri.—What, you've invited that barn-stormer to breakfast?

Jul.—Certainly.

Henri.—Why did you do it, when you know that she is so displeasing to me? I will not breakfast with her, understand that. If you don't send her a telegram withdrawing your invitation I shall breakfast at a restaurant.

Jul.—I shall not be so discourteous to a woman.

Henri.—Very well, then, I shall breakfast at a restaurant.

Jul.—As you wish.

Enter Jacques.

Henri.—(Ill-naturedly.) What, it's you?

Jacques.—As you see—A greeting to Juliette of the wheaten tresses! (He gaily presses her hand, then goes to the fire, which he stirs violently.) Wretched weather this, my friends. (He rings.) You'll permit me to send for wood? This is a regular poor-house fire, a poverty-stricken affair. (To Maria, who enters.) Bring in two big bundles of wood. (To Henri.) A cheerful thing, eh, a bright fire?

Henri.—(Drily.) We didn't expect you this evening.

Jac.—Nor did I expect to come, but when I looked at the thermometer I slipped away from my American with whom I was to pass the evening.

Jul.—Mr. Smith? The capitalist who is to finance your scheme?

Jac.—The very one. Fancy, he's a fellow that is always too warm. He made me dine with the window open. I had to keep my top-coat and muffler on—Even then my teeth chattered. Besides, it's really painful to listen to him. I can't explain how it happens, but curiously enough, he has an

accent at once Meridional and English—plum-pudding a la garlic.

Jul.—(Laughing.) No? Won't you have a cup of tea?

Jac.—Two, three, in fact a dozen cups, boiling hot, with plenty of rum.

Henri.—(Drily.) There is no more rum.

Jul.—(Drily.) Beg pardon, there is. It was the brandy that was all used. (She rings.) It's very nice of you, Jacques, to have come this evening. (To Maria, who enters.) Some tea, Maria, and quickly, too.

Jac.—(To Henri.) And you, old chap; haven't you anything to say?

Henri.—(Ill-naturedly.) What do you want me to say?

Jul.—(To Jacques.) Oh, he's got his back up; let him alone.

Henri.—No, I haven't my back up at all, I'm sleepy.

Jul.—Well, then, go to bed.

Henri.—Yes, that's it; let's go to bed. (He rises. To Jacques.) Good night.

Jac.—(Chaffing.) No, no; don't, I beg, insist this way upon my staying—Really you are too kind——

Jul.—(To Jacques.) He's the limit, isn't he?

Henri.—(Frowning.) The limit?

Jul.—Yes, the limit; with an upper case L. Just get wise to the fact, won't you, that I shall talk as I please. You're not in the prompter's box here. (Henri sits down. To Jacques.) Say, did you meet two ladies on the stairs just now?

Jac.—Two gaily feathered birds? Yes.

Jul.—One was Rosalie Cerneau. She knows that Spanish woman of yours well.

Jac.—What Spanish woman?

Jul.—Your brown friend. Now, don't play the stupid. The Andalusian that has eye-brows like mustachios and pendant charms.

Jac.—(Laughing.) You portray her amusingly, at least.

Jul.—Oh, but she admits it herself. She says: "I'm shapely everywhere except my stomach." In her way she's honest, though, since she doesn't deceive her clients as to the quality of her merchandise.

Jac.—Who told you all that?

Jul.—Rosalie, at the circus the other day. So they please you, do they, those women with busts like—(She makes a gesture.)?

Jac.—(Laughing.) Permit—

Jul.—Truly, it is scarcely worth while to be really shapely, well-groomed, elegant—(To Maria, who enters with the tea.) Put it there.

Jac.—(Teasing.) But my Spaniard dresses very nicely.

Jul.—Like a provincial jade. (She serves the tea and gives a cup to Jacques.) I've put both cream and rum in it. A most excellent mixture. Drink it while it is still quite hot. (She serves Henri without putting in his tea either cream or sugar.)

Henri.—And the sugar? You haven't put any sugar in it.

Jul.—The sugar-bowl is well within your reach.

Henri.—It seems to me that you might favor me with a little of your attention.

Jul.—What more do you want?

Henri.—Some cream.

Jul.—(Serving him with cream in an irritated manner.) There.

Henri.—Thanks.

Jul.—(To Jacques.) But what I don't understand is, that you should mocha and java with her.

Jac.—With whom?

Jul.—With Carmen. She must be called Carmen.

Jac.—Not at all. Her name is Diana. The name of a goddess.

Jul.—The name of a dog. Rosalie maintains that the surface of her body is the color of licorice.

Henri.—Now, now, Juliette.

Jac.—Oh, let her go on. I'm not at all sorry to become acquainted with feminine friendliness in all its horror.

Jul.—(With a rather nervous laugh.) Bah! After all, what do I care? You may be intimate with a monkey if you so desire.

Jac.—But what of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals?—By the way, is this the famous rose-colored gown?

Jul.—Yes, does it please you?

Jac.—Oh, fairly—It isn't, of course, a dream-creation, but—(He rises.) This is excellent. (Passes his hand over each part as he speaks.) There, it should fit more closely.—Here, it should follow the contour more perfectly, especially as it isn't at all difficult to follow such a contour—to hug it, so to speak.

Henri.—(Rather brutally.) Say, aren't you through monkeying with my wife. (He pushes Jacques to one side.) 'Tis quite sufficient.

Jac.—(Laughing.) "Honi soit," you know. You'll make yourself an anarchist yet.

Henri.—Since when have you become the arbiter elegantiae? And in what dive of Montmartre did you form your taste? (He mimics him.) "There, it should fit more closely. Here, it should follow the contour more perfectly." It's a good deal easier, I assure you, to criticise the gown than to furnish the forty louis that it cost.

Jac.—Each furnishes that which he is able. I, advice; you, the wherewithal. Both willingly.

Jul.—(Laughing.) Willingly? You just ought to see Henri's face when a dressmaker's bill is presented. 'Tis no ordinary sight. He refuses to credit his eyes, he adds and re-adds, he adjusts his eye-glass and passes an anxious hand over a fevered brow. Oh, he doesn't pay joyously. He pays like *on accouche*—But, say, Jacquot, I'll wager that you have forgotten to bring my samples.

Jac.—Pardon, I have them here. (Draws from his pocket some samples of wall-hangings.) I've brought, besides, a few

designs which may afford you some idea as to the furnishings.
(Draws a paper from his pocket.)

Jul.—(Clapping her hands.) Oh, that's the real thing!
It's charming, that sideboard.

Henri.—But it's too large for our dining-room.

Jul.—Well, it can be made on a smaller scale, can't it,
Jacques?

Jac.—Yes, but you'll have to wait—it will be long——

Henri.—And costly.

Jul.—And costly——Naturally. I should really have been
very much astonished if you hadn't uttered that word.

Jac.—(To Henri.) She's certainly not in her very best
humor, your lady, is she?

Jul.—(Laughing and gently threatening.) Are you anxious
to receive a slap?

Jac.—You should call it a pleasure. (Offering his cheek.)

Jul.—(Tapping his cheek gently.) There.

Jac.—(Kissing her hand.) Thanks.

Madam Gambler enters, rather loudly dressed.

Madam Gambler.—(Kissing Juliette.) A happy anniversary,
my dear.

Jul.—Anniversary?

Mad. G.—What! don't you remember that it is the anniversary
of your marriage?

Jul.—Well, well; is to-day——

Mad. G.—Yes, the 22d of February. Saint-Pepin. (She
laughs.) My, but I'm tired. (She sits down.)

Jul.—And aren't you thirsty?

Mad. G.—Yes, but not for tea. You might give me some
benedictine.

Jul.—You finished it the other day. (To Jacques.) Suppose
we look at the designs in the dining-room where the
furniture is to be placed.

Jac.—Very well.

Jul.—(To Henri and her mother.) Will you come?

2—Vol. II.

Henri.—In a second. I've a word to say to Madam Gambier. (Jacques and Juliet go into the dining-room. Henri, during the following conversation watches them occasionally through the glass door.)

Henri.—I wish to speak with you apropos of Juliette.

Mad. G.—(Astonished.) Of Juliette? Aren't you pleased with her?

Henri.—No, I'm very much displeased.

Mad. G.—Oh, Lord; what has she done?

Henri.—Nothing serious, at least not up to this time; but she acts too familiarly with Jacques, entirely too familiarly. I wish you'd speak to her about it. Twenty times I've been on the point of speaking clearly to her myself, but no sooner are we face to face than I feel myself weakening, and—I become a coward. Then I say nothing and end by kissing her.

Mad. G.—Ah, the fact is, you love her; you love our Juliette dearly—Yes, I'll rinse out her ears, I warrant you.—Oh, by the way, can't you, without inconvenience, make me a little advance on my next monthly allowance that you so kindly give me? Two hundred francs will be sufficient.

Henri.—Playing the races will ruin you, Armandine; or, to be more exact, it will ruin me. However, here's five louis.

Mad. G.—Oh, thanks; many thanks, Henri. (She wishes to kiss him. Henri draws back and offers his hand.)

Henri.—(Opens the door of the dining-room.) Juliette, your mother wishes to speak with you a moment. (To Madam G.) You'll not leave before you see me again? (He goes into his own room, on the right.)

Enter Juliette.

Juliette.—(Closes the dining-room door.) Well, what is it?

Mad. G.—So you're doing things on the sly, eh? Oh, you needn't open your peepers like that. Since you have the happiness to possess a mother, might you not at least have come to me and said. "Mamma, I have a lover?"

Jul.—(Stupefied.) What's that you say?

Mad. G.—Instead of which you've taken the bit between your own teeth. Now, you want to get a quiet hunch on yourself, for Henri is getting next to your doings.

Jul.—You mean that Henri is suspicious of me? Of what?

Mad. G.—Of being too intimate with Monsieur Jacques.

Jul.—And he told you that?

Mad. G.—Well, not just those very words. Tell her, she's a smooth article, he said, but I'm getting on to her curves and I want her to side-step that lobster or I'll renig. Now, Juliette, remember, divorce wasn't made for dogs.

Jul.—But he's a simpleton; an ass. There isn't that (Snaps her fingers) between Jacques and me.

Mad. G.—(Incredulous, reproachfully.) Oh, Juliette; to your mother!—

Jul.—I swear it before the Holy Virgin.

Mad. G.—Oh, in that case—(She bows respectfully.)

Jul.—(Angrily, but cool.) Ah, the idiot! the idiot! He shall pay for this! Yes, he shall pay for it—dearly!

Mad. G.—And now that I've given you the tip, as I promised my son-in-law, I'll go and tell him—

Jul.—Go tell him? Not much, you won't; you skip right off home, understand? Good-bye. (The mother leaves. Juliette opens the dining-room door.) Jacques. (He enters.) What do you think mamma just told me? Henri's jealous of you.

Jac.—(Surprised.) Of me? Why, it's idiotic. I'll go tell him so.

Jul.—No, no; stay right here. You know what Henri is. When he once gets an idea into his head, you can't pry it out. The more we should try to prove him in error, the more obstinately he would cling to the idea that he is deceived.

Jac.—But what can we do to quiet him?

Jul.—(After reflection.) Suppose you were to come less frequently.

Jac.—(Starting.) Less frequently—Well, I suppose I might come, say, every other day.

Jul.—Every other day? No; that would still be too often.

Jac.—(Quickly.) You think so?

Jul.—Once a week. Yes, just once a week; that would do very well.

Jac.—On Sunday?

Jul.—Yes, the very day; Sunday. A fête-day.

Jac.—And I should come to breakfast, of course.

Jul.—Yes, and I shall see that your favorite dishes are served, artichauts à la Grecque, poulet perigord, creme aux fraises.

Jac.—Ah, the delicious creme aux fraises!

Jul.—And no one shall drink your barsac, either, I warrant you. I'll put it under lock and key myself.

Jac.—Still, if Henri—

Jul.—Henri shall have it when you are here—and at no other time.

Jac.—(Touched.) Oh, thanks.

Jul.—And remember, no more little farce-comedy; no more criticism of my toilettes. And remember, too, it must be hands off. We must treat each other merely with cool politeness, in this way, I hope, we may make Monsieur Courtial realize that he has made a fool of himself and save you the annoyance of his jealousy.

Jac.—Admirably conceived; but tell me, what shall I do all the week while awaiting Sunday?

Jul.—What will you do? Why, the same as you always do—run around, visit, look after your affairs.

Jac.—I shall be horribly bored.

Jul.—Not more so than I shall be myself.

Jac.—Oh, yes; much more—because you'll surely find some way to amuse yourself.

Jul.—You think I'll be amused—

Jac.—Without a doubt, and 'twill be quite right—whereas I, alas, how well I know myself, when I'm tormented, can do nothing but mope.

Jul.—Isn't it strange? When I'm troubled, I'm affected

just the same way. I remember that one day in front of our old home, avenue Parmentier——

Jac.—(Quickly.) You lived in the avenue Parmentier?

Jul.—320, on the fifth floor. Do you know the place?

Jac.—Well, well! Why, we lived for twenty years at 322.

Jul.—What? Then you knew M. Pilon?

Jac.—For more than twenty years. Not a second less.

Jul.—I'm so pleased to hear it. I don't know why, but nevertheless I'm delighted.

Jac.—Yes, it is rather pleasant to have lived side by side and to have paddled round in the same gutter.

Jul.—Isn't it, though? Isn't it nice that we both should have left the avenue Parmentier to meet again here in the rue Puvis-de-Chavennes.

Jac.—You weren't very long, you, in making the journey.

Jul.—True, I travelled rather quickly—but yet a little patience and you'll conquer too. It is impossible that intelligent as you are, you shall die in the skin of a penniless man.

Jac.—I've been turned-down and set-back so often that I dare no longer even hope.

Jul.—Don't say that. Never utter such thoughts, never. Nothing attracts misfortune like believing ourselves menaced. My success is due to the fact that I have never doubted my luck. I have always said to myself, Life owes me this; I want it and I will have it.

Jac.—But 'tis hardly a parallel case. You have means which are wanting to me.

Jul.—What?

Jac.—(With a gesture which takes her all in.) Well——

Jul.—(Laughing, somewhat confused.) Oh, you simpleton!

Jac.—I can't, for example, make an advantageous marriage.

Jul.—Why not?

Jac.—In the first place, I don't know any rich woman.

Jul.—Oh, but she can be found by looking round. I'll find
22—Vol. XXI.

you one, if you like. (He shakes his head.) But of course you'd have to get rid of Carmen.

Jac.—That shall be quickly done, I warrant. Done smilingly.

Jul.—Well, I'm delighted to hear that. More delighted even than by the avenue Parmentier episode.—Besides, she isn't any proper friend for you anyway, and since you evidently don't care to marry, I'll find you the companion you require.

Jac.—Later on, perhaps. At this moment I truly couldn't put any heart into it. It would simply be impossible for me to be gracious.

Jul.—Truly? Is that strictly true? You are really sad to think that you cannot see me each and every day? Well, I'm delighted to think that you're sad—That gives me more delight than all the rest. For, after all, you know, I'm really not at all anxious to find you a companion. Were you to ask, I should look round, of course; but I really feel that I should do everything in my power not to find her.—But au revoir until Sunday.

Jac.—(Hesitating.) I'm strongly tempted to kiss you.

Jul.—(A little confused.) Kiss me, then.

Jac.—(Moved.) Come, come to my arms, that I may press you against me. (He hugs and kisses her.) I'm not hurting you, am I?

Jul.—No; it is delightful, delightful.

Jac.—I cannot live without you. My first thought upon awakening is, I shall see her, and this thought lends me courage for all the day. I close my eyes and evoke your rosy little image, and then all the Smiths in the world cannot daunt me.

Jul.—Nor can I live without you, either, Jacques. Each day while I await your coming, I am horribly bored; I yawn. I know not what to do. The afternoon seems an eternity. 'Tis only toward six o'clock that I begin to live; then I am dressing to receive you.

Jac.—Then you love me, you really love me, my Juliette?

Jul.—I believe so; indeed, I believe so. I say believe,

because when one has never loved, you know, one cannot be quite sure——

Jac.—Never loved! I have never loved either; but, all the same, I am quite sure that I love you. That I adore you—that I worship you.

Jul.—(Rapturously embracing him.) Oh, Jacques, dear Jacques——

Henri enters. He sees Jacques and Juliette before they have time to separate. Juliette screams. Henri strikes Jacques, and before he has time to defend himself, throws him out the door and closes it. Juliette, meanwhile pale and rigid, with dilated eyes, remains pale and immobile.

Henri.—(In a voice choked with anger and emotion.) You! You——whom I picked up in the street, in the slime of the gutter, in rage——in misery and want. You, that I picked up out of pity. (Juliette makes a deprecatory movement.)—Yes, indeed, out of pity. And this is the way you show your gratitude for my kindness. (Juliette smiles sneeringly.) Don't you dare to laugh. (With a violent gesture.) I absolutely forbid you to laugh. Could you by any possible stretch of the imagination claim that I haven't been kind to you?—that I didn't take you off the street? Look at me. (Juliette glances at him, then turns her head away.) 'Twas I, I that cleansed—renovated—you. (Juliette makes another deprecatory movement.) Yes, cleansed you of your silliness, of your vulgarity, of your baseness. Of the unfortunate little creature that you were, recollect, it is your own phrase, I have made a woman of honorable position—a wife. I have given you my name——my name, to you! To prove your gratitude a whole lifetime ought not to suffice. Yet what kind of a life have you led me?—Sad, unfeeling, heartrending.—Your nature has returned to the sidewalk, as slang has returned to your lips.—And I am so reduced that I implore sympathy of your mother, of Armandine Gambier, who takes advantage of the situation to get money to play the races. In all my life there was but one happy moment, the moment I held you in my arms, and now you have even found a means to soil that. Why did you do it? Answer me, why? What have you to say for yourself?

Jul.—Nothing.

Henri.—What! Nothing?

Jul.—Nothing whatever.

Henri.—But I want you to answer. I demand an answer.

Jul.—What's the use?

Henri.—I demand an answer.

Jul.—All right. You did take me in and feed me, it is true——

Henri.—Ah, you do admit that, do you?

Jul.—(Continuing.) And you cleansed me, since you insist upon the word, and you did make me your wife and give me your name. Yes, that is all very true. But what was your object in acting so charitably? You failed to tell that; doubtless (with a sneer) you forgot it. Well, I shall tell you. It was for your own sake and only for your own sake; through egotism. You spoke of my baseness: were you, then, so generous to save me from misery, but to make me your slave? You trained me but for your service: I was at once your nurse and your domestic. Just recall how you treated me. With what disdainful haughtiness you made known your desires. You even went so far as to whistle them.

Henri.—But——

Jul.—Ah, that was your most charming invention, and how proud you were of it! Still, after all, whistling is but part of the training process——They always whistle at dogs when they train them!

Henri.—But——

Jul.—And you were silly enough to count upon my gratitude——? And now you would like me to be touched at your kindness? Bah! The truth is, that when you received me into your home, you were playing a game at which you thought yourself the cleverest; and it so happened that you were worsted at your own game—Now pay and don't kick.

Henri.—Well, yes; it may well be true that in those days I was something of an egotist; but since you have become my wife, which of us is the slave of the other? My desires, my orders? What irony! The day that you finally became mine, I was captured, captured beyond hope of release. I am in

your power—you enchain me with the pressure of your hand. Have you been sufficiently revenged? With what can you reproach me since you became my wife? You live after your own fashion. My heart, my body, my fortune all belong to you; you are absolute mistress of them all. You impose upon me your desires, your fantasies, your tastes. You force me to receive in my home people whom I despise and whom I would not salute in the street. And I accept everything and consent to everything rather than to displease you. And you in return deceive me, yes, deceive me. And, pray, with whom? With Jacques, the failure; Jacques, the parasite. (Juliette starts.) You saw how I struck him in the face, how I kicked him out of the door. Aren't you ashamed of him? Aren't you ashamed to think that he permitted himself, without the slightest attempt at defence, to be kicked out of the door like a coward? (Juliette starts.) Ah, that touches you, does it? Coward! You don't like me to call your Jacques a coward? Your lover Jacques, for he is your lover, I'm quite sure. He is your lover, isn't he? Answer me, yes or no. He is your lover, isn't he? (Juliette turns her head.) Look at me, look at me, I tell you. (He takes hold of her head rather roughly and forces her to look at him.) Won't you answer me? He is your lover, isn't he. (Juliette remains silent. He raises his arm to strike her. She, immobile, makes no movement to escape the blow, but Henri lets his arm drop.) Go, or I shall murder you. (Juliette turns to leave, walking very slowly toward the door. She has almost reached the threshold, when Henri springs toward her, and, in a voice choked with emotion, says:) Juliette!

Jul.—(Stops and turns round.) What?

Henri.—(Stammering.) Juliette—Juliette, where are you going?

Jul.—I'm going to leave. You've driven me away. (She again starts for the door.)

Henri.—Wait. (She continues to go toward the door.) Juliette!

Jul.—(Stopping.) You said go.

Henri.—And for a single word you would go? Would leave your home? Would leave me?

Jul.—You said go.

Henri.—You would leave me? For a word, for a single word? Oh, it's impossible. You cannot really be leaving me.

Jul.—You said go.

Henri.—I said—Oh, I don't know what I said. Couldn't you see that I was not quite myself. Come, let's talk it over, like rational creatures. After awhile, if you still wish to go, you shall do so. But first, I implore you, answer me frankly just one question: Why were you unfaithful to me?

Jul.—(Slowly.) But I have not been unfaithful to you. Jacques is not my lover.

Henri.—(Completely upset.) What?

Jul.—Look at me, straight in the eyes—I swear he is not my lover.

Henri.—(Joyously.) Oh, Juliette, Juliette! Then this kiss was the first—the very first? Yes, yes; I understand now. You were feeble for a second. But 'tis past, finished. We will think of it no longer. We shall be happy, so happy—much happier than we've ever been before. (Changing his tone.) As to Jacques—

Jul.—(Interrupting him.) Don't accuse him; I, alone, was guilty.

Henri.—You?

Jul.—Yes; this evening you were more than I could bear. Your ill-humor, your jealousy, so unjust, drove me mad, and the despicable idea came into my head that I could revenge myself upon you by fondling Jacques.

Henri.—(Reproachfully.) Oh!

Jul.—And I flirted with him, flirted horribly, and, alas, poor Jacques forgot himself for a moment! Ah, you are all the same, you men!

Henri.—So much the worse for him, the imbecile. He shall never put his foot within my door again.

Jul.—Oh, come, come; haven't you already punished him sufficiently?

Henri.—(Affably.) The fact is, I did strike him rather hard.

Jul.—(Her face suddenly changed. In a bitter tone.) Yes, you struck him hard. (Again changing her face and tone.) And then, don't forget that poor Jacques is unfortunate. After all, you are his only means of existence. If you fail him what will become of him? Come, be indulgent. Everyone must be indulgent in this life. Think, you are rich and happy, while poor Jacques, as you said yourself, just now, is a failure and a parasite. Perhaps you have already made him feel that a little too much.

Henri.—Perhaps.

Jul.—Of course I don't advise you to ask him to return to-morrow. After what has happened I shouldn't wish it myself. But time passes so quickly.

Henri.—(Sighing.) Yes. (Juliette looks tenderly into his eyes.) I'll see—(After a short silence.) Ah, Juliette, if you but knew all that I have suffered in a moment! But 'tis past. 'Twas but a villainous dream and I am happy now—Dear, all that you said awhile ago, in a moment of anger, you didn't really believe, did you? Tell me that you don't really believe it. It was not a game that we were playing? It was not revenge that you sought? We are not two adversaries? there are neither conquerors nor conquered? We are friends, are we not, good friends?

Jul.—(After hesitating.) Yes—

Henri.—(Coming nearer.) It is late, you know; very late—(He kisses her.) What a delicious odor you have! (Again he kisses her. Then, in a very low voice.) Shall we—(He draws her toward the bed-room.)

Jul.—Wait a moment.

Henri.—Juliette, my dear little Juliette, I beg, I implore—

Jul.—Later—later—

Henri.—(Still drawing her along.) Juliette.—

Jul.—And you won't be naughty?

Henri.—I won't be naughty.

Jul.—And you won't be jealous any longer, nor make any more horrid scenes?

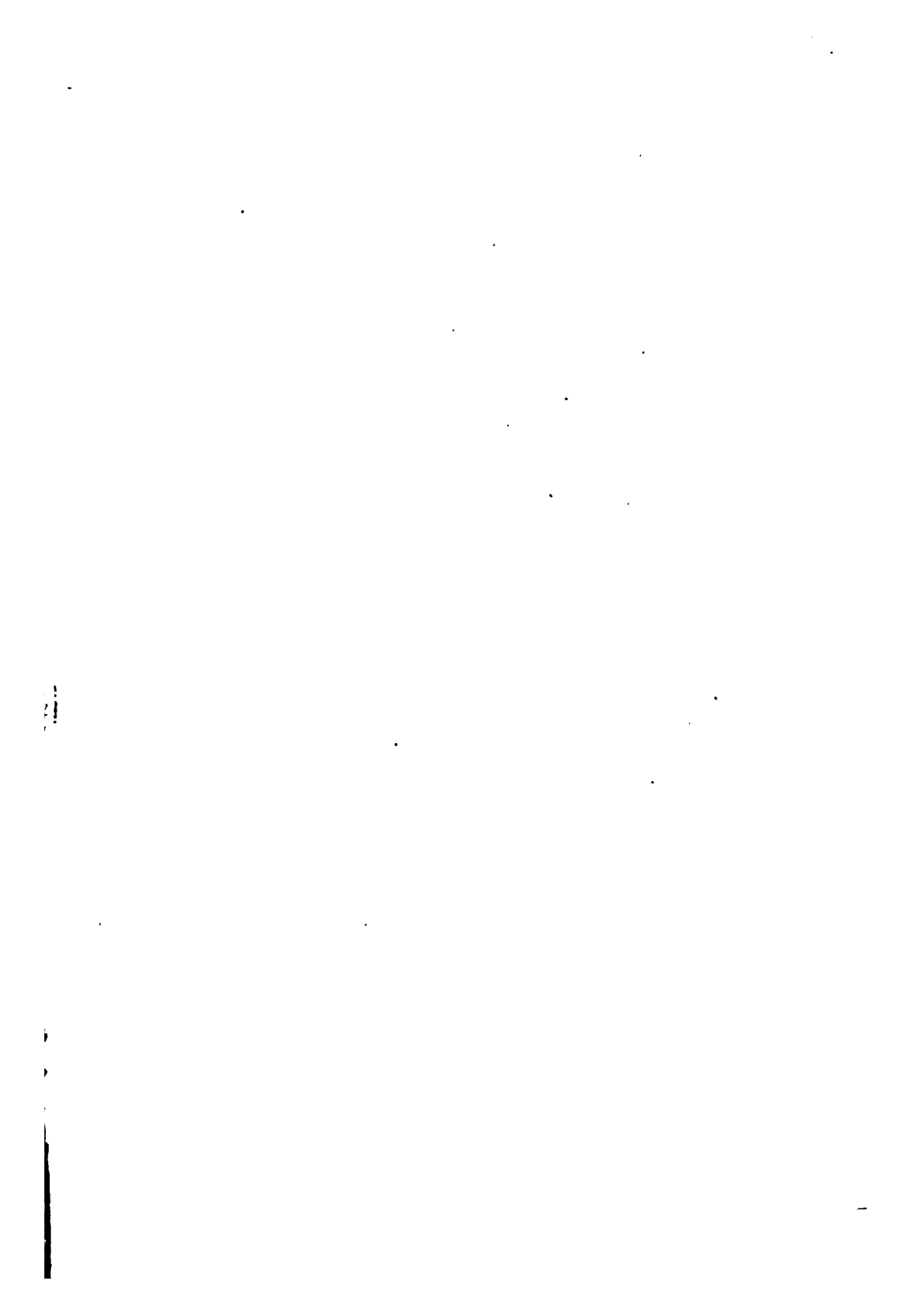
Henri.—And I won't be jealous any longer, nor make any more horrid scenes.

Jul.—And above all—above everything else—you'll grant everything I desire and do all that I wish?

Henri.—All that you wish, dearie, for ever and ever; all that you wish.

Jul.—(Smiling and confident.) Well and good!

Henri continues to draw her along, and as they disappear within the bed-room the curtain falls.



1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".

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